THE LIGHT OF THE WEST

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SIR WILLIAM BUTLER

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THE LIGHT OF THE WEST

WITH SOME OTHER WAYSIDE THOUGHTS

1865-1908

WITHDRAWN
FROM STOCK

By

LIEUT.-GENERAL THE RIGHT HON.
SIR WILLIAM BUTLER, G.C.B.

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PREFACE

THE papers collected in this volume were written or spoken during halts in a life which had other work to do: the oldest paper dates nearly half a century ago, the youngest is but a few months old. Some of them have already appeared in print, others have not previously seen publication—none pretend to be more than popular, or, perhaps, unpopular, views of some men, and of a few things. The circumstances under which all were put together were not conducive to the slower forms of contemplation. As one walked one had to watch not only the road in front, but the country on both sides. It was only at the halts that one could read.

In the great old days of the soldier's life the French knapsack had place kept in it for the Baton. That place is now filled by the Book. Doubtless, the change is for the better; but the book must always be a little one.

W. F. B.

BANSHA, *July*, 1909.

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The Light of the West

1880

It is the eve of the fifth century of the Christian era. A vast darkness is slowly closing in over the known world; one by one the landmarks are disappearing—the philosophies, the arts, the schools, all the barriers against the savagery of the outside wilderness, are crumbling to pieces in the relaxing grasp of a sensual civilisation. Slow and sure the waves of barbarian conquest rise around the wreck of empire, and the mighty fabric of Roman power is tottering to its final fall.

The unity of the Empire is gone, anarchy and tumult are supreme; factions, consuming each other in the capital, scarce cease their conflicts when the Goth is at the gate. Men of mean parentage or obscure birth are raised to the Imperial dignity, only to fall by poison or the dagger; the great names have become shadows, the triumphs of human genius, the trophies of vast ambitions, the monuments of colossal power, are slowly sinking beneath the waves of a nocturnal sea.

The Roman soldiers are leaving Britain, the first Frank has entered Gaul. From the frosty summits of Alp and Appenine, long lines of savage enemies

look down upon their prey. The time of the barbarian has come; one thousand years of slavery have now to be avenged. Along the vast frontier sounds the dull roar of coming multitudes; the boundaries of distant provinces tremble with the tramp of steed, and from cold Cumbria to sun-lit Numidia the outposts of the old civilisation are listening to the shrill trumpets of kings and chieftains summoning savagery to vengeance.

They come—gigantic Gothic footmen, from dim lands of marsh and forest beyond the Vistula; they come, in hordes of Hunnish horse, lithe-limbed and agile, from the vast plains that stretch into the sunrise beyond the Caspian; they come in ceaseless crowds of Vandals and Visigoths, of Heruli and Franks, across Carpathian steep and Pannonian plain, up the valleys of great rivers, over the wintry waves of Baltic and Euxine; they come, like lava from the mountain, to burn and wither the earth, like floods of winter, to ravage and submerge the land; they come, led by Alaric and Genseric and Attila, and a thousand nameless leaders, moving in the might of multitudes—to the wreck of Rome.

While thus, in whirlwinds of flame and blood, the reign of Imperial Rome is about to close, let us carry our thoughts into a lonely island of the Western Ocean, upon whose shores the Imperial eagle had never rested, and whose green valleys now lie, in this end of the fourth century, untouched by the waves of ruin that sweep the Empire from Britain to the Euphrates.

It is early morning in early summer; rising from

deep-indented shores, green hills merge into mountains over whose topmost peaks the sea-mists slowly trail, the russet hillsides glisten in the sunlight with the sheen of water on smooth rocks. Freshness is over all the land; freshness varying through many passing moods of sun and shadow—of winds that come straight from the crests of sea-waves to catch perfumes on furze-covered capes and heathery hillsides; freshness of valleys that are deep in green grasses and yellow flagger lilies; freshness of streams where shallows sparkle in sunlight and great curves of tranquil water are fringed with meadow-sweet; freshness of green rushy banks by lake and river, where the tall grey heron stands motionless, and the swallows skim, and the broad-leaved water-lilies are golden isles to tempt the dragon-flies to rest.

Summer is coming early to this island, and all the woods and glades are speaking his advent in voices of bird and brook and breeze, as sweet in sound as woods and waters are fresh in sight.

The lingering cuckoo floats his note from glade to glade, so softly sweet that all the poetry begotten of man's brain in springtime's honour, since the world began, is but music's mockery in comparison.

Let us take our stand in fancy upon the hillside, midway between the sea-mist on the rugged crest and the green valley at the mountain foot; above us the heather, beginning to tinge with the purple of summer, is sleeping in sunlight; still higher the white folds of sea-mists are lifting themselves from the topmost teeth of crags that hold their feathery

fragments, dissolving into space; high over all, black specks against blue heaven, a couple of golden eagles are soaring in great circles upon moveless pinion.

Below lie outspread all the jewels that lake and stream, copse and meadow, smooth-rounded hillside, tree-covered island, can deck the face of the earth with. Far off, between hills, a glimpse of blue sea stretches to the sky-line. Around us the mountain holds, in deep glen and along the banks of rushing stream, clump and copse of hoary oak, scarred with the slowly accumulated sinew of centuries; of birch tree, upon whose silvery stem the sunlight glistens through the green of early leaves; of yew and hazel bush; of holly, still bright with berries of last year's autumn; and hawthorn, still glowing with white blossoms of a lingering spring.

In an open glade between the woods, where the grass of the lower mountain is beginning to give place to hardier heather, a flock of sheep spreads out over the hillside; above them on the mountain is the solitary figure of a man, one in the first prime of life. A large wolf-dog lies at his feet, for the woods and glens hold many a prowling animal in their rugged fastnesses.

From his station by the big rock, the shepherd has in sight the entire ground over which his sheep are feeding. At times his eyes wander across the vast scene of wood, lake and valley lying beneath, and now and again he scans with wistful glance the distant strip of blue sea, bounded by the remote

horizon. Then, as though that glimpse of far-off ocean had stirred his soul to other memories, he kneels upon the mountain side and bows his head in long and fervent prayer. Strange sight, this solitary shepherd thus kneeling in prayer upon the lone mountain of this Western island! The rugged rock yields him altar-step; the heather and the hawthorn give him incense; the dome of heaven is his church roof; and up above the mountain tops, above the white clouds, all the matchless music of the summer goes floating heavenwards, higher than the eagles soar, bearing his prayer to the throne-step of God. But we must go back deeper into the bygone.

Ninety years earlier, in the very beginning of the fourth century, there had come a solitary wanderer to the ocean end of Rome's great highway in Northern Gaul, where now, somewhere north of Amiens town, the white cliffs of Boulogne face the narrow strip of sea. For 300 years before, along this broad paved highway, whose miles were measured from its golden post set in the Roman Forum, myriads of men moving in might of arms had passed to conquest; hither had come Cæsar, Agricola, Suetonius, Severus, and Adrian, with hosts of cohorts, legions, and armies, marching to do battle with fierce tribes in northmost Britain; but now all these have passed away, and only a solitary pilgrim, with staff and cleric's robe, dust-marked and travel-worn, comes, bearing to this verge of Northern Ocean a strange and lustrous light—that light, the same which 300 years before

had first shone, "filled with the brightness of God," upon lowly shepherds keeping midnight watch on the cold hills of Bethlehem. So had this light hitherto been borne, through all the intervening years, to wherever in southern space this wandering pilgrim had caught its radiance, and, filled with its glory, had turned him northwards to bear it to the furthest bounds of Empire. He was only doing what many a nameless and forgotten pilgrim had already done—what many a nameless pilgrim had yet to do; he was carrying the "brightness of God" a little further, ere it was time for him to lie down beside the Roman highway, and to rest.

And what had this light been doing, as thus in the hands of the poor and lowly of the great Pagan world it came gleaming along all the roads of Rome? Ah, that indeed would be a story difficult to tell. It had fallen through the rusty gratings of damp dungeons, gilding the captive's chain until the fetter seemed soft as the clasp of angels' fingers around weary wrists. It had stolen into the dreams of millions of tired slaves until their worn features brightened, and their dry lips moved in the ecstacy of its gleam. It had shone upon the heart of the victim in the arena, so that torment and terror came unheeded to human bodies soul-steeled in the white radiance of its lustre. It had hovered over timid women in the yelling amphitheatre, clothing their nakedness in shining garments, blinding them to the glare of famished animals, giving to them a constancy that made Pagan soldier and centurion poor cowards in their craft of courage. This, and

and a thousand times this, it had done over all the vast dominion of Rome; for these scenes in prison or amphitheatre were only the visible signs of the great change wrought in the interior life of man on earth—hill-tops double-steeped in the "brightness of God," standing out along the horizon of a new creation. And now, as we have already said, this light has reached the end of Rome's great road, its bearer to be here received, as elsewhere others, with contempt of governor, derision of populace, and finally with death at hands of headsmen; but here, as elsewhere, the light itself to spread silently among the hearts of men, and to kindle in souls fresh rays, which are to be borne onward through space of seas to the shores of far-off islands. It was about the year 302 when Firmin, torchbearer and saint, laid his tired head upon the block at Amiens. How well the harvest grew upon his grave—how quick the torch was carried beyond the Roman roadways we have now to see.

Thirty years go by. The great road is still pressed by footsteps of cohorts, passing to do battle far north in Britain against wildest Pict, or to oppose the nearer but more persistent pressure of Frank invasion from the fens and forests of the lower Rhine. It is winter time; snow lies over all the wide plateau, far as the eye can reach east and west of the Roman road. But the scene we would recall has already been told by a master in words that can scarcely be heard too often. He says *:—

"Somewhere about this spot" (a hill, half a mile

* Ruskin.

south of Amiens city), "or in the line between it and St. Acheul, stood the ancient Roman gate of the Twins, whereon were carved Romulus and Remus being suckled by a wolf, and out of which, one bitter winter's day, . . . when Clovis was baptized, had ridden a Roman soldier, wrapped in his horseman's cloak, on the causeway which was part of the great Roman road from Lyons to Boulogne. And it is worth your while, also, some frosty autumn or winter's day, when the east wind is high, to feel the sweep of it at this spot, remembering what chanced here, memorable to all men, and serviceable in that winter of the year 332, when men were dying of cold in Amiens' streets—namely, that the Roman horseman, scarce gone out of the city gate, was met by a naked beggar, shivering with cold; and that, seeing no other way of shelter for him, he drew his sword, divided his own cloak in two, and gave him half of it. No ruinous gift, nor even enthusiastically generous. Sydney's cup of cold water needed more self-denial; and I am well assured that many a Christian child of our day, himself well warmed and clad, meeting one naked and cold, would be ready enough to give the whole cloak off his own shoulders to the necessitous one, if his better-advised nurse or mamma would let him. But the Roman soldier was no Christian, and did his serene charity in simplicity, yet with prudence.

"Nevertheless, that same night he beheld in a dream the Lord Jesus, who stood before him in the midst of angels, having on His shoulders the half of the cloak he had bestowed on the beggar.

"And Jesus said to the angels that were around Him, 'Know ye who hath thus arrayed me? My servant Martin, though yet unbaptized, has done this.' And Martin, after this vision, hastened to receive baptism, being then in his twenty-third year.

"Whether these things ever were so, or how far so, credulous or incredulous reader, is no business whatever of yours or mine. What is and shall be everlastingly so—namely, the infallible truth of the lesson therein taught, and the actual effect of the life of St. Martin on the mind of Christendom—is very absolutely the business of every rational being in any Christian realm."

Here, then, in thirty years, the seed planted by Firmin has grown into a stately tree; already, under the dead husk of Paganism, the hearts of men are Christian, and at the farthest fringe of the Empire a Roman knight can be a soldier of the Cross. Another thirty years pass by, and still greater has grown the change. It is no longer the lowly and the outcast who carry the sacred light; the catacomb has been exchanged for the hill-top; the Cross has been stamped upon the standards of Rome; and over the shattered systems of twelve centuries—over the wreck of Pagan rule, and the ruin of Pagan temple, the sunrise of Christianity is flashing light upon the crests of the Western Ocean.

Among the mass of material that has come down to us from Roman times there is little that shows the life of a Roman citizen in the provinces of the Empire—his every-day existence—his buying, his

selling, his hours of indolence or of exertion. The great machinery of the national existence is fully unfolded to us. There is no lack of the collective vice or virtue of an epoch—no want of detail in the surroundings of the central figures; but the inner life of a Roman province or a Roman city lies hidden for ever, save where, preserved under the cinders of volcanoes, it has been exhumed by the pick and shovel of the modern excavator. Strange that to irruptions of barbarians, and to an eruption of Vesuvius, we should owe both the darkness of our ignorance and the light of our knowledge of the every-day life of the Roman world.

But of all the dark times of that Roman world, the darkest is the twilight hour immediately preceding the final disruption of the barriers, about the year of Christ 365. The gloom of that great disaster, in which the apostate Emperor had lost life and army, far down in the remote regions of the lower Euphrates, had spread over the Roman world, carrying messages of terror to Roman citizens, and joyous exultation to bordering barbarians along 4,000 miles of frontier.

A hundred fierce tribes sprang to arms. The Picts, the Scots, and the Attacoti passed the wall of Severus, and poured down upon the frightened inhabitants of Britain; the Saxons swept the eastern coasts; the Western Sea "foamed with the hostile oars" of the Irish rovers; and only within the fortified cities of the island could the broken remnants of the Roman legions find safety.

During four dark years the northern barbarians

and their Saxon and Irish allies revelled in all the luxury of life which Roman dominion had created in Britain. But at last there came a change. The end of the great Empire was not yet to be. Another generation has to pass ere the impending mass of outside Gothic power will summon courage sufficient to hurl itself at the heart of Rome. Tribes which had panted on the Vistula for the plunder of Roman provinces paused as they neared the Danube; chiefs who vaunted of easy conquest on the Elbe grew wary as they beheld, across the Rhine, the standards of Rome. It was now, while the gloomy masses of Germanic manhood held back, daunted on the threshold of the Empire by the spectre and the shadow of the Roman name, that there passed into Britain a large Roman army, to avenge the insults and defeats borne during many years at the hands of the northern invaders of the island. Of the progress of this army we have but scant and conflicting record. Vague and dim the rescuing legions loom as they march northward into the wilds of Caledonia amid the swarming hosts of light-armed Gaels, whose southern limit of conquest the ocean alone had stayed. But the Roman legions were no longer Romans. Heruli from Pannonia, Franks from the lower Rhine, formed the flower of the army. Nor was there along the vast length of the Imperial frontier, from Danube mouth to mud and moraine of Rhine's wide delta, a hardy tribe of barbarians which had not some stalwart representatives among the legions of Theodosius. And so much to our purpose this

fact, however widely it may seem to lie beyond the scope of the story we would here tell.

And now it may well be asked what connection can there be between the lonely shepherd on the Irish hill, the Roman officer, giving half his cloak to the shivering beggar on the road outside the present city of Amiens in 330, and the march of the army of Theodosius thirty-seven years later into Britain? Only this much, that three positive facts relative to that shepherd come to us from that far-away time with whatever of certainty there is possible to history. The first, that he, the lonely shepherd, was a Roman youth taken prisoner by sea-rovers on some part of the coast of Gaul or of Britain; the second fact, that he was either the nephew or the grand-nephew of that Roman horseman whose cloak was halved with sword-cut on that memorable winter's day outside the gate of present Amiens; the third, that this same shepherd was the son of an officer in the Roman army, sometime stationed in Gaul and sometime in Britain. Here then, around Amiens, at the end of the great Roman road, and at the end of the last century of Roman Empire, we have with certainty one central point linking together the widely severed scenes in the shepherd's life which for many hundreds of years have taxed the minds of those who have tried to pierce the gloom of dim and distant centuries, and to place in certainty of sequence the story of Patrick, Apostle of the Gaels and Light of the West. "He was born in North Britain, in 372," writes Usher. "By the shores of the Irish Sea," says Jocelyn.

"Not far from the Western Sea," writes Probus. "At Banaven, in the territory of Tabernia, my father dwelt, and it was there that I was made prisoner," says Patrick in his "Confession." But who shall now identify Banaven, in the territory of Tabernia? Various attempts have been made: Boulogne, Dumbarton, Armorica, Amiens—all have found supporters to their different claims. But it is only by a close study of the movements of the Roman legions in Gaul and Britain in the last half of the fourth century that we begin to see the link that exists between the facts of relationship and parentage, which clearly centre in northern Gaul, and the suppositions regarding Patrick's birthplace and scene of his captivity, which have vexed the minds of historians and biographers. Let us pause a moment to inquire how the movements of Roman armies and the composition of the various legions can help us as side-lights on our way. But first we will set down the facts of relationship and parentage which have descended to us undisputed.

Martin, by profession Roman knight or soldier; by birth, barbarian of Dacia; by nature, God's noblest man, in Roman Empire or without it—is serving in northern and eastern Gaul throughout the middle of the fourth century, where also are quartered at this time the three legions called the Celtæ, the Heruli, and the Batavians or Franks; the Celtæ recruited from the Gaels of Ireland and Scotland; the Batavians from Franks of the lower Rhine; the Heruli from a warlike people dwelling on the borders of Dacia and Pannonia. These three

legions, themselves barbarian, formed the strength of the Roman army against the unknown mass of outside barbaric force, then dimly stretching from the Rhine to the Volga. That the legionaries regarded themselves as fixtures in Gaul is certain, for their engagement in the Imperial service was strictly conditional upon their never being called upon to serve beyond the Alps; and that they had with them in Gaul their wives and family belongings is also clear beyond doubt, from the fact that when Constantius, despite this public pledge of service only in Gaul, summoned them to march to his assistance in the Persian War, "the wives and families of the soldiers" were transported in post waggons from the northern garrisons on the road to the Alps. This was in 360. Here, then, we have Dacian and Batavian soldiers—all of them "Franks" or Freemen, in contradistinction to Romans, or Subjectmen—living with their wives and families in that wide region which to-day forms North-eastern France, Luxemburg, Belgium and Lorraine. Seven years from this date—viz., in 367—Julian having meantime disappeared, and the Cross again become the standard of the soldiers, these same veteran legions, Heruli and Batavians, have crossed from Gaul to Britain, and are pushing back, under Theodosius, the Caledonian tribes beyond the wall of Severus, in northmost Britain, giving to Rome, even in her decadence, a new province beyond the Cheviot Hills. So much for the nationality of the legionaries and the movements of the legions during this decade of years, 360 to

370. Let us see how these nationalities and these movements suit the purpose of our story. We have already said that the shepherd on the Irish hills was either the nephew or the grand-nephew of the Roman knight, Martin of Amiens, once of Dacia; and also that he was the son of a Roman officer (nationality uncertain, but probably Frank), sometime stationed in Gaul and sometime in Britain. Yet one other fact regarding his parentage. His mother, Conchessa by name, had been taken captive by the Franks in her youth, about 365, and became the wife of one Calphurnius, son of her captor. Conchessa, member of a Roman officer's family (Roman officer being a Pannonian, and therefore probably in Heruli legion), is taken prisoner by Frankish Calphurnius, who must therefore be fighting against Rome, in or about 364; but Calphurnius is a Roman officer a few years later, certainly in 372; he must then have changed sides during these intervening eight years. Let us see if again the history of the Roman legions can help us to solve this apparent contradiction.

We have already alluded to the general uprising of bordering barbarians which followed the death of Julian and the disasters of the Persian War. The first efforts of the Emperor Valentinian were directed to repair and repress the damages and the incursions of the formidable bands of Alemanni and Franks, which had penetrated deep into the Rhenish provinces of Gaul. Here is what Gibbon says: "Before Valentinian could cross the Alps the villages of Gaul were in flames; before his general,

Dagalaiphus, could encounter the Alemanni, they had secured the captives and the spoil in the forests of Germany. In the beginning of the ensuing year (364) the military force of the whole nation, in deep and solid columns, broke through the barrier of the Rhine, during the severity of a northern winter. Two Roman counts were defeated and mortally wounded, and the standard of the Heruli and the Batavians fell into the hands of the conquerors, who displayed with insulting shouts the trophy of their victory." Then follows the account of the campaign undertaken by Valentinian to revenge these disasters, which had taken place on the ground where Metz and Châlons now stand. The Herulian and Batavian legions were led by the Emperor in person, and, after a series of desperate battles, forced the Alemanni across the Rhine, and re-established the Imperial boundary at that river, where, we are told, he raised "numerous levies of barbarian youth" for the future protection of the empire. Here, then, we have the Franks raiding far into Northern Gaul in 363, defeating the legion composed of Martin's countrymen, Heruli, and carrying them captives to the Rhine. We have the Frankish legion in pursuit the following year, and we find it recruiting largely on the frontier from the same barbarian tribes so lately at war with Rome. Three years after this, we have these two legions in Britain under Theodosius, their chief scene of operations for some years later lying around the wall of Severus.

Is it trespassing too far into conjecture to point

out this chain of historical events as holding within it the solution of all the apparent contradictions in Patrick's relationship, parentage, birthplace, and scene of capture—bringing together Martin's long residence in Northern Gaul—Frankish father and Pannonian mother (Martin's niece)—subsequent service of father in Roman Legion—movement into Britain and residence behind the frontier wall of Severus? And, if we go a step farther, and place "Banaven in Tabernia, by the shores of the Irish Sea," somewhere on the coast of Cumberland, where Whitehaven stands to-day—does not such identification suit the probable contingencies of the shepherd's capture by rovers from Northern Ulster, rather than the usually accepted scene by the estuary of the Somme, where so frequently it has been placed? Having said all this, trying to pierce the dim vista of the centuries, we will go back to the young shepherd and his flock on the hills of Erin. Captive from Gaul or from Britain—it matters little which—he has henceforth to be dealt with through life upon conditions which no longer need to be read by the light of Roman history. Henceforward he becomes a living reality in the world's story; his figure ever more to loom big above the years. He stands before us at this time in these, his own, words: "After I had come to Ireland," he tells us, "I was daily tending sheep, and many times in the day I prayed, and more and more the love of God and the light of His faith and fear grew in me, and my spirit was stirred, so that in a single day I have said as many as a hundred prayers, and in the

night nearly the same. When I dwelt in the woods and on the mountains, I was called to prayer before the dawn by the snow, the ice, and the rain. Nor did I suffer from these things, nor was there sloth in me, for the Spirit was burning within me."

Burning, as a solitary light, was this shepherd's Christian faith on those wild Irish hills. All around is the darkness of Paganism. From north to south, from east to west, the Druid is supreme in the island. The great idol of Guthard stands erect on the plains of Cavan; and the sun, as he tops the eastern hills, or sinks into the vast ocean in the west, pours his morning and evening beams upon millions of his worshippers.

For six years the life of the hill, the life of the valley and the plain, was the shepherd's lot. Captive from his home and his people; condemned to labour among strangers at the bidding of a stranger; exposed to whatever storm the wild winds might bring him, he dwells amid the misty mountains of Ulster, forming in his mind one fixed resolve—that the bondsman would deliver his masters from the chains of their idolatry, and from the darkness of Paganism the captive would set free his captors.

The years pass on—the youth has grown to manhood. Still sleeps the summer heather in the sunshine, the sea-mist still trails along the hill-top, and morning after morning the grey strip of ocean lies athwart the severed hills; glimpse of freedom and home, sweet to the shepherd's eye as sunlight through prison bars would be to weary captive.

Yet think not that these years of servitude have been wasted—fragments of time, broken bits of life flung into the vast gulf of the past; body and brain, soul and sense, have grown and ripened, become purified, steeled, strengthened, and solaced—growing in the spaces of mountain and the solitude of the woodland, strengthening in the freshness of the spring, ripening in the fulness of summer sunshine, steeled by the wintry tempest, purified by the prayer of lonely nights, and solaced by that same voice which, 400 years before, first spoke to shepherds keeping night watch on the hills of Judæa: "Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy that shall be to all people."

And now these things have done their work—the solitude, the seasons, the sunset and the storm, can teach no more. It is time that the young man should go forth to other scenes: far away by the broad current of the Loire, where Martin now, from sword and crozier resting, is waiting for the final peace—further off still, where Germanus dwells at Auxerre, and out in the blue waves of the Mediterranean, where the rocks of Lerins are soon to bloom with flowers and fruit at the hands of Honoratus and his followers. But there is still another scene to be visited by the shepherd, grander than aught else the world can show: a scene never again to be looked upon by the eyes of men after ten years shall have passed away. It is Rome, before the barbarian has placed his foot within her Forum. In this year, 400, the great city stands in all her matchless magnificence, crowning her hills, spread-

ing into her now lonely Campagna, and opening her twelve colossal gates through stupendous walls which are more than twenty miles in circuit. How infinitely far apart it all is! This lonely island in the Western Sea, where never Roman soldier has set his foot, where the rude pillar-stone stands amid the storm-swept gorges of the old grey hills, and the gigantic cromlech rises upon the misty sea-verge of windy promontories; and then this vast Imperial city, seated on her seven hills, sated with the plunder of the world during seven centuries of dominion—grand beyond all human grandeur, her temples, her palaces, her amphitheatres; rich beyond all other richness, her gold, her silver, her precious gems; all waiting in the twilight of this, the eleventh hour, for Alaric and his hungry Goths.

One night, lying asleep in hut or cavern, amid the Ulster hills, the shepherd is dreaming of his far-off kinsfolk in Gaul. "Thou fastest well; thou shalt soon go to thy country," a voice seems to whisper to him. "Behold! thy ship is ready." And, rising from sleep, he sets his face towards the south, travels day by day until the sea is reached, and, after many vicissitudes by land and sea, is at last a free man in Gaul. And now a long thirty years go by; freedom and friends, long unknown, are sweet, and for a little while they tempt the man to loiter on the road he has chosen.

It would be so much easier to sit down by Loire-side vineyards, where the chimes ring sweetly from Marmoutiers towers, and the vesper song floats

on the broad waters, as the sun sinks beneath the long reach of golden river.

Yes, it would be pleasant; but it was not for this that hunger and tempest had been borne on the Irish hills—it was not for this that the snow and the rain had called him to prayer in the long nights of winter, Again in the midnight hour a voice whispers in his sleep—this time a voice raised in supplication—"Come back to us and teach us—come back and walk again among us," they seem to cry to him from some far-away shore. "I thought," he tells us, "the voice was the voice of the Irish coming to me from the woods of Foclut, near the shore of the Western Sea."

But how is he to teach a nation? "The lips of the priest shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth, because he is the angel of the Lord of Hosts." Knowledge? the frail barque that now holds its flickering lamp, is struggling amid dark and tempestuous seas. The Vandals are over-running Spain—two hundred thousand Goths look down upon the Arno from the rocks of Fésole—the Burgundians are penetrating far into Gaul. Behind, in gloomy succession, come Alemanni, Suevi, and yet further off the Hun looms dark against the sunrise. But great men stand on the deck, ready to lift the frail vessel well over the waves beneath which the Roman world is for ever to perish. St. Ambrose at Milan, St. Germain at Auxerre, St. Augustine in Africa, St. Jerome in Asia, and countless soldiers lost in the stream of Time, are placed full in the path of the barbarians,

to conquer with the Cross what the sword of Empire shall fail to vanquish. Mark this difference between the missionary of that day and some missionaries of this! No mere enthusiasm for the task of heathen conversion was enough—an enthusiasm which frequently evaporates, leaving a comfortable cleric with a comforting wife to survey a well-filled quiver and an empty church. No, they managed those things differently in the fifth century. Let us see how the shepherd proceeded to store his brain with the "knowledge" which was to be given forth to those who were to "seek the law at his mouth," when the voice of the Irish "called him from home." In the College of the Lateran at Rome, at Lerins on the Tuscan Sea, at Auxerre in Gaul, for nearly thirty years he studied to prepare himself for the task. From "the mother and the head of all the churches of the city and the world," he learns the great lessons of Faith and Doctrine; from the toilers of the Lerins' rocks he catches the true spirit of human labour, of charity to all men, of patient and unselfish toil. In Germanus he sees the best type of the ruler and the leader of men, one who, as Roman governor, had studied the characters of subject and hostile races, and whose dignity could awe the rough Burgundian into reverence. Such the master and the schools in which the shepherd Patrick studied for nigh thirty years. Think over it well, ye modern missionaries, who marvel why the heathen hears ye not, and the walls of Paganism fall not down before your psalm-song!

And now these thirty years of study and preparation have passed away; the shepherd is again in Erin. The Easter Eve, 433, is falling dark and cold upon the realm of Ireland—dark and cold because to-morrow is sacred to the idols—and it has long been ruled in Druids' law that on the night preceding the great fast of Tamhair no fire is to burn on hearth or hill—no light is to gleam from palace or hovel until the flame of the sacred pile kindled by by the king on the green "rath" at Tara, shall be seen burning over the plains of Meath. So the twilight comes down, the light lessens in the west, and the wide landscape is wrapt in deep and solemn gloom, as though it had been a land in which man's presence was unknown. While yet the sun was high in heaven, the missionary had quitted his boat in the estuary of the river Boyne, and had passed on foot along the river valley towards the interior of Meath. Evening found the little band encamped upon a grassy ridge on the north side of the Boyne, and overlooking the winding channel of that river. To the south, some miles away, the hill of Tara was in sight. The March evening fell chilly upon the pilgrims; but the hill-side yielded store of furze-faggot and oak-branch, and soon a camp fire blazed upon the ridge, casting around a wide circle of light into the momentarily deepening sea of darkness. What memories of far-off nights on the Antrim hills come to the pilgrim over the mists of thirty years, as here he stands in the firelight, on Irish soil again! How much has passed since last the furze-faggot warmed his lonely shepherd's

bivouac! How much has yet to be in all yon grim surrounding gloom ere his task shall be accomplished! Never in all the ages of the world has the might of savage man been more manifest on the earth. Already the Vandal king is in Carthage; the Visigoths are seated at Toulouse; Attila has reached the Rhine, having ridden his charger over the ashes of the Eastern Empire.

And here, in the light of the solitary fire, stands an unarmed, defenceless man, who, even now, keeps this Easter Eve as a vigil of battle against the powers of Pagan darkness, throned over yonder in all the might of armed multitudes.

The darkness deepens over the scene; the March winds smite the faggot flame, and around the lonely bivouac the breezes come filled with the vast sadness of the night. Feeble to outward sense must seem the chances of the coming struggle. But the inner sense of the Great Missionary may this night be looking upon a different vision. Beyond the bleak ridge and circle of firelight—out beyond void of darkness, perchance those deep-sunk eyes are beholding glimpses of future glory to the Light he has come to spread; and it may be that his ear, catching in the echoes of the night wind the accents of ages yet to be, is hearing wondrous melodies of sound rolling through the starlight. Look well upon that fire, Great Messenger of God to the Gael! the flame thou feedest with the furze and the oak faggot is a light never more to die from this island. Kings of twenty lines shall rule the ridge of Tara, where now the Pagan monarch is watching, with

jealous eye, the fire thou hast kindled. Wars and devastations, inroads and invasions, shall sweep the land, and its hill-sides shall see fire and famine, and its valleys shall hear wail and lamentation ringing through myriad ages yet unborn; but never, through the vast catalogue of thy children's sorrow, shall this light of thine be quenched. Nay, the tears and travail of coming generations shall be but fresh fuel to spread over God's earth this holy flame—beyond the shores, beyond the oceans, into continents yet unborn, the sacred light will touch the hill-tops of Time until it merges at last into the endless radiance of Eternity!

One other scene out of many from that far-away time, and we have done. The fifth century is near its end. The task has been accomplished, the old man's course is nearly run. No idol stands erect in Erin. Meadow and mountain, flagger-lilied valley and heathery hill-top, hear the chimes of vesper bell as the sun goes down. On lonely sea-rocks, and treeless, wind-swept capes, the hermit has his cell, and from shore to shore the green island in the Western wave is wholly Christian.

There is a legend of olden time which tells of a vision seen by the Apostle a short while before his death. In that vision he is shown the future of the island for whose good he had dared and done so much. The sight, full of sorrow, of trial, of suffering, of anguish, wrung the old man's heart, and he cried aloud in the darkness: "Will God thus cast off His people for ever?" and then a voice answered through the night, bidding him look out

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into the distant future, for beyond the gloom there was light, and beyond the sorrow there was hope.

Yes, there was light far away in the West—out in the great ocean—far down below the sunset's farthest verge—from westmost hill-top, the New World lay waiting for the light. It came—borne by the hands of Ireland's starving children. The old man tottered with the precious burthen from the fever-stricken ship; the young child carried the light in feeble hands to the shore; the strong man bore it to the Western prairies, and into the cañons of snowy sierras; the maiden brought it into the homestead to be a future dower to her husband and a legacy to her children; and lo! ere famine's night had passed from Ireland, the Church of Patrick arose o'er all that vast new world of America, from where the great St. Lawrence pours its crystal tide into the daybreak of the Atlantic, to where California flings wide her "golden gate" to the sunsets of the Pacific. Nearly 1,400 years have gone since, on the 17th of March, 493, Patrick passed from earth to Heaven. Empires have flourished and gone down, whole peoples have passed away, new faiths have arisen, new languages have sprung up, new worlds have been born to man; but those fourteen centuries have only fed the fire of that faith which he taught the men of Erin, and have spread into a wider horizon the light he kindled. And if there be in the great life beyond the grave a morning trumpet-note to sound the *réveille* of the army of the dead, glorious indeed must be the

muster answering from the tombs of fourteen centuries to the summons of the Apostle of the Gaels.

Nor scarce less glorious can be his triumph when the edge of sunrise, rolling around this living earth, reveals on all the ocean isles and distant continents, the myriad scattered children of the Apostle, whose voices answering that sunrise roll-call re-echo in endless accents along the vaults of heaven.

Napoleon and St. Helena

1908

When I was written to lately on the matter of a lecture, it was suggested that I might find a subject which had been already produced, and might again be made available on this occasion. The time for preparation was short. Many other things had to be done. Still I wished to give Tipperary something new as a subject. What was it to be? From where I now live that range of mountains of which we are all so proud—the Galtees—is seen in almost its finest aspect. I need not describe it to you. Galtee More is to a Tipperary man what Vesuvius is to a Neapolitan—always in view. Looking at the mountain one day it struck me that in mass and form it resembled a far-off mountain island which has filled a prominent place in my mind all through life. More than forty years have gone since I first saw that lonely rock, set in the South Atlantic, which bears the name of St. Helena. I wished to make that island the subject of my address this evening. The coincidence of shape and mass between the near mountain and the distant isle gave point to my intention, and thus it came about that when your honorary secretaries asked me to give them the title

of my paper I was able in truth to tell them that the subject-name was "An Island"—information which, if you consider it, must have left them in rather a vague and unsatisfied condition of mind as to the precise spot of the earth's surface upon which the mind of their lecturer was destined to alight. For when you think of it the island is the world's universal rule. From the solitary rock of the Skellegs to Great Britain, and from Great Britain to Australia, and from Australia to Asia, Europe, and Africa, it is only a difference of degree. Islands they all are. The great ocean rolls its waves around them. We might follow the idea farther. The big earth itself, the planets, the sun and the stars are only islands set in the endless ocean of space.

And now, let us to our particular island in the South Atlantic and its Galtee likeness at our doors. If you imagine Galtee More taken from the western end of the range and placed in its centre; if you shorten the range by about one mile in length from east to west, and broaden its breadth from north to south by two miles, you would have a correct ground plan and general elevation of St. Helena. Although no point in the ridge of St. Helena attains the height of Galtee More—3,011 feet—there are several peaks in the island which run to 2,700, and the average altitude of the island ridge would be higher than that of the Galtees. But there is a marked difference between the lower ridges of the two places. Where the Galtees sink into the surrounding country in gradual and easy

slopes, the descent of the land into the water at St. Helena is frightfully precipitous. The last thousand feet may be said to be sheer precipice—most of it impossible of human or animal foothold in its almost perpendicular face—the final couple of hundred feet being hollowed by the action of sea and storm into cavern shape, so that a stone falling from the overhanging edge would drop clear into the ocean.

The entire sea front of this enormous rampart is of a dark and forbidding colour. A chocolate brown merging into black, except where some landslips or rock slide has left exposed a strata of igneous formation, which has yet to take its full measure of weather-sombring colour.

When a vessel is still ten miles distant from the island the upper ridge of mountains can be seen to hold trees upon its serrated surface. These are lost to view as the ship draws in to the shore, and nothing is visible but this lofty, dark, perpendicular wall of rock capped in places with turret-like blocks and pinnacles, to many of which the early settlers gave names, such as Black Point, Scraggy Point, Turk's Cap, the Sugar Loaf, the Barn, the Flag-staff, the Castle, the Chimney, the Friar, Mount Eternity, &c.; while some unfortunate settler has given his name to a ledge of more than usual danger, from the top of which he had fallen, or at the foot of which he had met his death, crushed by a rock slide.

The encircling rock is broken at a few points by exceedingly narrow and steep valleys, through

which rills of water, fed by springs in the interior range, cut their way to the sea. These valleys are mere clefts in the wall, and they are at their lower extremities dangerous to dwell in on account of the over-hanging masses of rock held above them at heights varying from 800 to 1,000 feet. The only town on this island—Jamestown, called after the second king of that name—has known numerous fatalities from this ever-present source of danger. Whole houses have been swept away, and on one occasion some sixteen unfortunate beings were crushed to death beneath rocks which crashed down upon them in the night.

This strange spot, set in the middle of a vast ocean, was first discovered, so far as modern record goes, by a Portuguese sailor, Juan de Nova Castella, on the 21st of May, 1502, on his return journey from India. The day was the anniversary of the death of Helena, the mother of the Emperor Constantine. The lonely spot took her name. On the north side the encompassing wall showed a narrow opening, and in this cleft a landing was effected. The island was then forested down to the edges of the precipices overhanging the sea.

After this glimpse the curtain descends upon St. Helena for nearly a century. A wandering sea-rover saw it at long intervals. One of these men wrote:—"The sailors have an ironic proverb, which says that the way into this island is such as a man may choose whether he will break his heart going up, or his neck coming down"—an apt description holding good to this day.

Such is St. Helena from the sea—a black, rugged, mouldering mass, lifting itself to a great height, casting upon the ocean, which is ceaselessly breaking in deep reverberations at its base, the dark shadows of its own forbidding aspect. It resembles some vast berg riven by earthquake, black with age, anchored in a hopeless sea. Various theories as to its formation and geological structure have been formulated by scientists. Some have thought the volcanic mass was a remnant of an old continent consumed by fire in the early geologic periods of the earth's history. Others have imagined that these confused layers of scoriæ—the metallic and vitrified rocks that start up in goblin shapes in the interior—have owed their strange forms to enormous subterranean forces which had rent the crust asunder and thrown out upon the surface the very entrails of the earth itself, the inner strata of the globe whose splintered deformity neither the action of time, sun, rain, nor storm could soften or subdue. These are guesses; but what is certain is that no marine fossils exist in these chocolate-coloured rocks; that they are the oldest pieces of earth-structure found by man in the globe, and that in the original flora of the island there were trees and plants wholly peculiar to it.

Only one practicable entrance exists—the narrow valley, in the bottom of which Jamestown stands. Passing inward along the narrow street the road begins to ascend steeply ere the town is quitted, and a very abrupt pathway cut out of the hill on one side, and built up out of the valley on the other,

leads into the centre of the island. As this pathway winds up the brown mountain side at the steepest grade possible to wheeled traffic an altitude is soon reached which permits the visitor to see something. All around, in a confusion which increases as he advances, impassable hills rise at angles that defy foothold. Between these hills narrow valleys open to right and left, giving contracted vistas which in a few yards will be closed again by intervening boulders. The bottoms of the valleys are filled with the ruins of the mountains, among which a dwarf foliage shows as higher altitudes are gained. A mile from the landing-place an elevation of 1,000 feet is reached. The aloe and prickly pear now grow along the roadway. All at once a tiny oasis appears in a cup or hollow to the right of the road. An old bungalow is seen among wild olives, cypress trees, and palms. It is the "Briars." Enormous precipices of the eternal chocolate rock surround this plot of verdure; a rill coming from the interior falls over the lowest part of the lip of the encircling precipice. This waterfall explains the trees and the flowers. Everything outside the garden is brown, baked, and barren. Looking back down the gorge one sees the ocean between the V-shaped walls of the valley—the horizon of the sea now enlarged by the thousand feet we have ascended. It was in this rock-environed bungalow that Napoleon spent the first six weeks of his imprisonment in St. Helena.

That is what has brought us to this desolate spot. But we go deeper into the island before we come to

that subject. We follow the track, still ascending; the wall of the valley on the left can now only be negotiated by zigzagging up its face. Four or five exceedingly steep zigzags and we gain the crest of the ridge which divides Jamestown gorge from that which is named Rupert, after the prince of the civil wars. We are now 1,800 feet above the sea, high enough to look over the ridge we have been ascending. Looking to the right one sees that a change has taken place in the character of the scenery. Grassy hills have succeeded the barren browns and sterile rocks; the aloe and cactus are no longer the sole signs of vegetable life. The oak, the willow, the fir tree are on the hill-tops to the west; the sheen of furze blossom is on the hill-sides, deep valleys are grass-covered; but on the left side of the road there is no change. Dark and forbidding ridges of lava, profound chasms of brown clays and brick-dust rocks still meet the eye east and south. Suddenly the path emerges upon the edge of a gigantic chasm, the bottom of which is 1,000 feet below its upper rim. At the further side of this great earth-rent, and at the same level on which we are moving, a farm-house stands bare and bleak on the opposite ridge, a mile distant. To the left of this farm-house a black mountain, steep as the walls of a house, and flat at top as a ridge roof, stops the eye on that side. In front of the road we are travelling the culminating ridge of the island—Diana's Peak—rises eight or nine hundred feet still above us. Between this dominating ridge and the black mountain mass

stands the solitary house, to the right and left of which we see, in strips, a misty grey ocean, spreading into interminable southern space. The solitary house is Longwood. The track now leads along the edge of the great chasm, or hole, into which we look with astonishment. It plunges down one thousand feet in five hundred yards, to rise again in the same wrinkled desolation to the plateau of Deadwood. Following the edge of this old crater for another mile we gain its head, or starting point. Here, at a place called Hutt's Gate, the mountain ridge along which we have come suddenly ends, and another profound gulf opens on the right, leaving a narrow ridge of lava rock between the two chasms to carry the road onwards to Longwood. But at this point we are close to a very celebrated spot—nothing like it that I know of anywhere in the world. It is the tomb of Napoleon—a small secluded level spot of verdure and softness, lying lapped among gigantic arid wastes. Above, on this roadway, the south-east wind shrieks and whistles as it passes over the narrow rim of lava rock. Below, three hundred feet to the left of the track, all is leaf, shade and quiet. A spring of clear cold water wells out of the hill-side. Tall cyprus trees and taller pines stand around a small oval plot of grass, in the centre of which an iron railing encloses a large white slab of stone. The wind, as it passes the encompassing edge of the valley above, just catches the loftiest of the pine trees, and adds its low music to the murmur of the little spring beside

the grave. The famous willow tree has long since disappeared, but successors of a third or fourth generation are still growing by the tomb. A fringe of scarlet geraniums wreathes the feet of the iron railings. Around are the bare lonely hills; but across the lower gorges, on the north side of Rupert's Valley, the sheen of the ocean is visible between the trunks of old pine trees. The road to Longwood is carried along the saw-back ridge that divides the gorges of Rupert's and Fisher's Valley for a mile beyond the tomb, and the traveller then only becomes aware of the secret of Longwood—that secret so successfully kept during the captivity of Napoleon, and which is still but little known to the outside world. On whichever side the newcomer looks he beholds, written in gigantic characters, the word "Prison." He may have imagined, as the vessel in which he came neared the solitary rock in the midst of a vast ocean, that the rock itself was the most formidable, natural fortress he had ever beheld. His mind may have run back over the many horizons of water and sky upon which his eyes rested since he last saw land. But these will not have prepared him for the aspects of desolate and remote isolation which the plateau of Longwood will now present to him.

This plateau, bounded by those terrifying ravines of Rupert's and Fisher's Valleys on two sides, and by the walls of the Barn, the Flag-staff, and Turk's Cap, which overhang the ocean at 2,000 feet elevation, on the other side, forms an inner prison of even more impassable boundaries than the outer

conditions which the sea and shore have provided.

But these things were only part of the prison programme which the English ministers had provided for the guest whom their representative had invited on board his ship at Rochfort for conveyance to England.

To understand the story of the captivity in St. Helena in the measure of the minds which designed and carried it out, we must go back to the moral aspect of the island selected for the imprisonment.

Almost from the moment of its discovery it seems to have been used as a safe spot for the persecution of helpless human beings. Slavery set its stamp upon it at once. Its first white inhabitant had been a Portuguese nobleman, upon whom the vengeance of the savage tyranny of the sixteenth century had fallen. This unfortunate being had suffered terrible mutilations at the hands of one of the sea captains of the time during a voyage to the East Indies, and he was left on the island on the return to Europe, with a few negro slaves to minister to his wants and miseries.

"Over that melancholy cinder fortress," writes one of the most vivid writers of our day, "seems still to hang the shadow of its first human inhabitant, flung there with every limb and feature mutilated, and a few slaves to fulfil for him the functions for which he had no longer hands or feet." That was in 1513.

One hundred and fifty years later England took possession of St. Helena, and from shortly after

the Restoration onwards we possess full records of what was done in the way of Government administration there.

A terrible record it is—blazing out almost from earliest infancy of settlement into acts of inconceivable cruelty and injustice.

Through this time we follow the records of St. Helena along an undeviating track of slave torture, until the air of the wind-swept rock seems saturated with savage injustice.

The facts are set forth with a candour of detail and perspicuity of description that leaves nothing for the imagination of the reader. Nor do the records deal only with the relations between master and slave. They supply evidence of a general depravity of life and manners exceeding anything which the pencil of the time of Hogarth portrayed—the chaplains and doctors being apparently in no degree behind the remainder of the community, but standing out rather as leaders or "fuglemen" in the work of human wrong-doing.

It would be a mistake to suppose that this reign of atrocity ended with the eighteenth century. One extract will suffice to the contrary. Under date Nov., 1810, we read as follows:—"Nancy May, a free black, for stealing fowls, sentenced to receive two hundred lashes—viz., fifty from different parts of the town—tied to the cart's tail, and wearing a paper with large letters, 'Fowl Stealer,' on it. Her husband is sentenced to the same punishment on the strongest presumption of his guilt. Nancy May's lease is taken from her and sold, she being un-

worthy of being a tenant of the company." If this was the justice meted out to "free blacks" less than a century ago you can fancy what must have been the nature of the punishments reserved for the slaves. But we will continue on our road.

A mile along the crest of the saw-back ridge which I have described leading from Hutt's Gate to Longwood, brings us to the gate of that place. Two little, one-storeyed houses mark the gateway on either side. At this point the great earth clefts—Rupert's and Fisher's—cease to run parallel to each other. The deeper one, here called the Devil's Punch Bowl, one thousand feet of almost sheer descent from the narrow roadway, turns off to the north, while the gorge of Fisher's bends away to the east. If we imagine a capital letter Y laid upon the ground, the foot of the letter being at Hutt's Gate, just over the tomb, and the division of the upper arms of the letter beginning at the gate of Longwood; while the two separated arms hold between them the area of the plateau, we shall have an exact likeness of the approach to the place, and a ground plan of the rents in the surface of the earth by which the plateau is encompassed and enfolded. The triangle held between the arms of the capital letter is Longwood, and the opening from one arm to the other across the top holds the walls of the Barn, and the Flagstaff mountains over two thousand feet in almost sheer elevation. At the point where the right hand arm of the letter touches the sea the plateau of Longwood ends in a rock, called Horse Point, beneath which

the cliff drops in a tremendous precipice, 1,400 feet, almost straight into the sea. A grey gloom hangs over this portion of the island. The scanty grass of the plateau is grey. The roads are grey. The ocean is grey. The clouds drifting in from the ocean and clinging to the central mountain cast over the lower ridges their grey sombre shadows. The few stunted trees growing upon the plateau lean before the pressure of the never-ceasing south-east trade wind; they, too, are grey. They stretch out gaunt arms and ragged branches, from which wisps of old grey moss hang and wave in the wind. All down the sides of the enormous ravines which flank the plateau strips of lava and ashen-grey cinder-strata, wrinkled and furrowed by the rain of ages, stretch and wind like gigantic serpents, crawling seawards. Beyond these gorges the line of the sea-cliff wall rises—all grey, too—its sky-line, cut into huge teeth-like protuberances, or piled up in masses of rock, from whose outlines it needs no imagination to shape distorted features and goblin figures along a visual horizon of some eighteen miles circumference. Everything within that dreary circle looks exactly what it is—the grey ruin of some extinct volcanic world. Of this gloomy circumference Longwood farmhouse is the centre. Let us go to it. A straight avenue of five or six hundred yards leads from the road to the house, the ground ascending gradually as it nears the building, and falling slightly on the further side; but in rear dipping down at once into the depths of Fisher's Valley. Thus the house of Longwood

stands, or stood, for certain things are now changed about it, on a perfectly open and slightly raised platform exposed to view from every side.

The house is all a ground-floor building, without basement. The walls are thin and bad, partly of stone and partly wood. The ground plan is in the shape of the letter T, the entrance being at the bottom of the letter, without hall or vestibule, but having a narrow verandah in front of the doorway with three or four stone steps leading to it, Two rooms, one inside the other, occupy the whole length of the straight line of the T. Four mean rooms fill the cross portion of the house. They are of the most ordinary plan and structure. The outer room—that into which the doorway opens—is the largest and the best apartment in the building. It is of wood, and was hastily put together by the carpenters of the admiral's ship on the arrival of Napoleon at St. Helena. Within this wooden room is one of lesser size, which was called, by courtesy, the drawing-room In the cross-section of the house the four rooms are small, low, and mean-looking. The floors creak. The ceilings can be touched by a man holding a short cane in his hand. The windows are small, and the glass is bad. The floors are but a few inches above the ground. Nothing that was done to the building by the ship's carpenters of Admiral Cockburn, nothing that has since been effected by the restoration and improvement wrought under the orders of Napoleon the Third in 1860, can remove from the house at Long-

wood the mark and measure of what it originally was—an old cow-house, which had been converted into a five-chambered farm house, where a deputy governor of the island sometimes dwelt for a short time during the hot season of the year.

Thousands of books have been written about the captivity of St. Helena. One look at Longwood is worth them all. It gives the instant measure of the men who selected it for the residence of the greatest human being of whom history has record. Its meanness is their meanness; its lowliness is their lowness. It was not the poor soldiers who had to stand sentry along the gloomy limits of that lava enclosure who were the jackals watching the caged lion slowly expiring. No, the jackals were the ministers in England and their tools in St. Helena, probably the most ignoble band of constitutional conspirators whose possession of power and authority had ever disgraced the name of a powerful nation. For remember the nation had no part in the infamy of St. Helena. Had it been possible to have asked the nation for its yea or nay upon the question of deportation it is most probable that three-fourths of the people would have voted No.

The English Ministers of 1815 no more represented the real opinions of the majority of the English people than they represented the people of New England.

The long war against French democratic ideas had produced the worst form of Government possible in any nation—the absolutism of an

oligarchy. A small gang of corrupt men held England by the throat and remorselessly plundered her people.

They hated Napoleon, not because he had conquered Europe when Europe had warred with France, and leagued itself to destroy her, but because he had broken down the barriers of caste and creed. He had opened the door of life to all, and had made the serfdoms of the feudal system henceforth impossible in the world. Among the reasons put forward by the English Ministers in 1815 for the selection of St. Helena as the place of Napoleon's exile stress was laid upon the freedom, the comfort, and the absence from perpetual surveillance which it would be possible to allow him in that island.

He was to live, it was said, at Plantation House, in the midst of gardens, shrubberies, and shelter. Nature had guarded the island by so many wards of sea, rock and remoteness that an amount of personal movement would be possible to the prisoner, which could not be given him elsewhere. Maps and pictures were published in London in the autumn of 1815, in which Napoleon's residence in St. Helena was shown as at Plantation House, in the midst of beautiful scenery; while elaborate descriptions were given to the public of the sumptuous furniture which was being provided for him, and of the many comforts and conveniences with which he was to be surrounded.

From first to last all this was the rankest falsehood.

Why was Plantation House not given to Napoleon? and why was it declared in England that it would be his residence? We can answer these questions from the first letter which Admiral Cockburn wrote to the Admiralty, explaining his selection of Longwood "as the future residence of General Bonaparte," published forty years later:—

"Longwood is detached," he wrote, "from the general inhabited parts of the island; therefore, none of the inhabitants have occasion, or are at all likely to be met with passing in its neighbourhood. It is, moreover, a place easily secured by sentries." As to more favoured parts of the island, he agrees in considering it "of importance to keep it from the view of General Bonaparte and his military followers." What do these statements mean? They mean that Longwood was uninhabited because it was a waterless, wind-swept, lava-strewn waste, where human beings did not live. Where

"No man came
Nor had come since the making of the world."

There were, in fact, two distinct St. Helenas within the compass of these narrow shores—the St. Helena that lay to the north and west of the central mountain ridge and that which lay to the south and east of the same mountains; and the fact of this opposite dualism existing between these places in climate, scenery, production, and people must ever be kept in mind by those who desire to understand the true story of the captivity of St. Helena, and the mendacity of the ministers in relation to it.

When the ministers and their supporters spoke of St. Helena it was the central island of green valleys, flourishing shrubs, shade and gentle showers that was put forward; but the St. Helena of the captive was this desolate plateau of Longwood and Deadwood—the rat-burrowed lava-bed on the opposite side of the island, perched up 1,800 feet between sea and sky, with the whole force of the south-east trade wind ceaselessly beating upon it. Why was it deserted by inhabitants? Why was it easily guarded by sentries? Why did nobody pass by it? To answer these questions we must look back a little.

The first mention of Longwood is under date 1679, when it is reported as "full of hogs run wild." Fifty years later it is said "to swarm with rats; that they are building nests like birds in the trees, the country thereabouts being over-run with them." In a description of St. Helena, published in 1805, Longwood is described as "bleak and unsheltered, unsuited to the growth of fruit, flowers, or any plants save the dwarf gum trees, indigenous to the rock." Another writer of later date says:—

"Farming experiments at Longwood gave rise to such hopes of success that a barn was erected there, . . . but all the crops having failed one after the other, the buildings were abandoned, and no further attempt at cultivation was made. The want of success is to be attributed to the climate of this part of the island, which is exposed to all the hurtful influence of the south-east trade wind, and not, as

some have asserted to the innumerable quantity of rats found at Longwood."

Such was the place selected for the residence of Napoleon by the servants of Great Britain. A converted barn, which had been abandoned because nothing would grow around it, over-run with rats, standing in the midst of a wind-swept, sun-baked, and alternately rain-lashed waste. A prison within a prison. The outer prison itself a lonely rock set in an illimitable waste of waters. This was "the place by the fireside," he had asked from "the most generous of his enemies."

And now, as to the place being "easily watched by sentries." How had that come about? I have already said that men of science were divided in opinion as to the origin of the rock. Whether it had been cast up out of the depths of the ocean, or whether it was the last vestige of an old island continent long ago ruined and dissolved by vast subterranean fires.

Thirteen years after the death of Napoleon an officer specially charged with investigating the geological structure of St. Helena thus explained the original formation of Longwood, and his work incidentally answers the question why the place was "easily guarded by sentries." Longwood, he says, is a bed of volcanic matter which in some remote age of the world was poured from a vast crater, now called the "Barn Pool," and which, cooling as it ran, became a plain, cut off from the remainder of the island by rivers of lava, which, at a subsequent period, issued from other volcanic centres, scooping

out those great earth-rents or fissures already described. "In the level lands of Longwood," writes this author, "there is not the slightest indication of fresh water, while in the remainder of the island there are upwards of two hundred and forty-five springs of the purest water." No doubt it was easy to watch this lava bed with its bare surface and ashen sides, scraped into impassable precipices. But what about the verdure, the healthiness, and the other amenities of the place, so much insisted upon by the ministerial utterances and organs of the time?

But, however easy nature may have made the task of watching Longwood by sentries, that part of the prison programme was not to be lessened in any way. It would, indeed, be safe to say that no prison ever had so many guards and watchers set around it night and day. Thirty-five sentries were always on duty. A camp of soldiers, one thousand strong, was established at Deadwood, full in front of Longwood House, and within half a mile of it. Another camp of cavalry and artillery was placed at Hutt's Gate, where the narrow hill-crest leading to the plateau began. There was a guard at the entrance gate. Detachments of troops were placed at every spot to which a boat could approach. Picquets patrolled the roads. Alarm posts and signal stations were on all the hills surrounding the lava plain. At sunset the chain of sentries drew in and closed up to the house until they formed a close cordon around its walls. The most rigorous forms of martial law were enforced upon the inhabitants

of the island. No person could stir from his house after sunset without a special pass. If the military countersign was forgotten, any officer, no matter how high his rank, had to return to his quarters or spend the night in durance.

Guns were dragged up at enormous labour to all manner of extraordinary places, where their ruins can still be traced by adventurous hill-climbers. A secret police was established. In the words of a distinguished writer of the time, "Not only was he (Napoleon) a prisoner, but he was watched with more than Argus' eyes, and could scarcely move from his house to his garden without a lengthy report of the important migration being transmitted to the governor." But all these precautions within the island rock were insufficient to satisfy the anxieties of the gaolers.

"The precautionary measures by sea equalled those by land," says the same author. "As the one had its general and army, so had the other its admiral and fleet. The coasts were especially under the care of the naval commander. Brigs were sailing around the island. Guard boats kept watch at every nook from which a cockle boat might depart, and if any individual, whatever his employ, was found afloat out of his own ship after sunset he became a close prisoner for the night. Every punt, every fishing smack, belonging to the natives was numbered, and the owners made responsible for their being converted to any illegal purpose. Foreign traders were ordered away, and no British vessel could cast anchor without having

been previously visited, and due leave granted for the same. Line of battleships made assurance doubly sure off Jamestown, and the marine communications were carried on by signals with as much exactness outside the island as by the land system within." All this is only the bare statement of truth. How it all worked out, what suffering and sickness it entailed upon the unfortunate sailors and soldiers has never been recorded. There is a deep valley or "gut," as these ravines are called in St. Helena, just under where the old camp stood at Deadwood, and about 1,000 yards from Longwood House. The old men in the island still point out a large spot in this gut where more than four hundred infantry soldiers—chiefly Irish—are buried. No stone or stick or mound marks their last resting-place.

That, like so many other gloomy doings of the captivity, had to be forgotten. And yet all this guarding, marching, watching, and warding was as nothing compared to the deliberate policy of petty insult and sordid persecution which was to follow the arrival of Sir Hudson Lowe as Governor of St. Helena, six months after Napoleon came there.

That this system of insult and annoyance was deliberately entered into with the knowledge and by the orders of the Ministers in England I have not the shadow of a doubt. I have studied the chapter of St. Helena for more than forty years. I have visited the island three times in my life. I have lived in the precincts of Longwood and its neigh-

bourhood for a month. I have carefully examined and compared one with the other all the statements which have been published, officially and unofficially, dealing with the captivity, and I have read a vast number of the letters and articles which have appeared during the last eighty years in the Press or in the fugitive magazine literature of the time. The evidence, in my opinion, is overwhelmingly strong that the object sought by English Ministers in 1815 was not the exile, but the speedy death, of Napoleon. That was literally, as well as figuratively, the base thought in their minds.

When the plan for effecting the death of Napoleon at Rochfort, designed so elaborately by Castlereagh and Croker, failed in 1815, having been frustrated by the Emperor's acceptation of Captain Maitland's invitation to convey him to England, other methods of destruction had to be found. Exile to St. Helena did not promise enough. Hudson Lowe had to be added to it. The policy of assassination by insult and pin pricks would then be better assured. And yet now, when nearly one hundred years have passed, who would have had it otherwise? While the earth stands so does St. Helena. That lonely ocean rock will ever have graven upon it two words—"Majesty" and "Meanness." The supreme majesty of this man, Napoleon; the intense meanness of the people who consigned him to a lingering death upon that awful rock. He had asked a place by their fireside. This was what they gave him.

Now, when all are gone—gaolers and guards,

majesty and meanness, persecuted and persecutors—the lonely island takes its true place—a mightier monument of the strength of a single mortal than is to be found elsewhere in our world. Ocean-girt, vast, lonely—always seen above the centuries, this colossal death-bed, held high between heaven and earth, will remain ever visible to man.

He had foreseen it all. "If I considered only myself," he said to one of his followers, "I might even have had reason to rejoice. Misfortunes are not without their glory. Adversity was wanting to my career. Had I died on the throne enveloped in the dense atmosphere of my power, I should have remained to many a problem; but now misfortune will enable all to judge me without disguise." So it has been, and so it will remain. The world can never get enough of "that one man, of whom alone it has been said that his life made all bygone glory doubtful, and all future fame impossible."

Parnell

1908

I PROPOSE to-night to speak of a man whose precise place in history is still difficult to determine—a man who came into the political life of Ireland without any previous preparation, without notice, without training, suddenly, unexpectedly. A man who, almost from the moment when his foot touched the deck of our island ship—at the age of twenty-nine—took the helm as easily and as fittingly as though he had grown to command through long years of political apprenticeship and professional service. A man whose youth or college course had not been passed in the study of Irish history; who had never brooded over Irish wrongs, nor travelled among the people of the island, nor shared their lives, nor devoted himself to their politics, nor written or read about them. A man whose first attempt to enter the political arena in 1874 had been a total failure; of whom the critics of the time wrote that he was only "a respectable mediocrity," that "he had no political capacity whatever," and whose place in the election of that year was at the bottom of the poll.

In what I have to say this evening I shall

endeavour to follow the life and work of this man through the short fifteen years which formed the span of its active effort, starting from the year 1875, which saw him classed as an ordinary unit among the Parliamentary nonentities of that year, and ending in 1891 the foremost figure among many notable personalities of his era, the one perhaps whose name is destined to float longest above the surface of the years to come.

What, we may ask, was the secret of so much success, and of such a rapid pre-eminence? The answer, I think, can be given in a few words. The inner force or essence of Parnell's nature was neither political nor administrative, nor legal, nor judicial, nor academic. His inner instinct, the automatic impulse of his life, was *Rule,* Empire, Command, call it what you will. I think the short word "hold" best suits the attribute in the catalogue of phrase which men have coined to express the supreme in human nature. Had Parnell adopted the military profession he had in him in the highest degree that natural instinctive rapidity of judgment which is the first condition to success in war, the gift of instant realisation, of the *there,* not *there,* that thing which, when you put courage behind it, will, if life last, baffle and beat down the people who oppose it. Rule, Judgment, Daring, these were the qualities, the possession of which made Charles Stewart Parnell, at the age of thirty, the most powerful leader known in Ireland during the last seven hundred years of her harrowed history.

But, running under and through these great rocks of character-foundation, there was something else which was the product of the land in which he was born, and of the times in which he lived. Courage, grasp, and judgment belong to no particular land or clime; but this other quality of which I speak was Irish. I think it belongs to Ireland more than to any of the nations of the earth. I can find no precise name for it in the English language. Perhaps because persons of peculiarly English race seem to be little accustomed to it. It is sympathy with suffering peoples; it is rage and anger against injustice. It is something of the woman in man. It is a good deal of the God in man. It is the uprising of the human heart and the divine soul against "Man's inhumanity to man." That was the finer and the final attribute of sympathy, of pity for misfortune and passionate hatred of injustice which was to win him the service of many hearts, and was finally to break his own heart.

Parnell was born at Avondale, in Wicklow, on the 27th June, 1846.

At that moment Ireland was about to enter upon that famine which has written on the history of the world one of its most tragic chapters. There had been a partial failure in the previous year of the root which was almost the sole sustenance of the Irish people. But they had said this failure is nothing; let us plant more. It will be all right next year. They planted more, and the next year brought a total destruction of the wretched root. Long before

autumn came the fields were a mouldering, sickening mass of rotting vegetation.

In that day in June, 1846, which gave Parnell to Ireland, nearly nine millions of human beings were living within the compass of the Irish seas. Twenty-one years later, when the child reached manhood, the population had shrunken to five millions. One million and a quarter had perished of famine and fever, and three millions had fled beyond the seas. Parnell once said that he did not care for details. He wanted broad facts.

This famine fact—the first that met the eyes of his manhood—was broad enough. Wicklow had borne its full share of the catastrophe, half its population had disappeared in these twenty-one years. That bit of Ireland which is called Wicklow forms a notable standpoint from whence a survey, geographic and historic, may be taken of the island. The highest point—Lugnaquilla (the nest or hollow of the grouse)—sees from its 3,040 feet platform about half the entire land. The Galtees in Tipperary, the Commeraghs in Waterford, Keeper by the Shannon, and Mourne by the sea, are all visible on a clear day in summer from that lofty bird's perch. Wicklow epitomises Ireland within its compass—mountain, valley, forest, river, moor, and meadow are within it. Its eastern slopes are known as the Garden of Ireland, and the names of the glens and the mountains that enfold them seem to have the very essence of freedom in their sounds—Glenmalure, Luggalaw, Glendalough, Lugnaquilla, Imail, Ovoca, Corrigcower, Avonmore, Laragh,

Lugduff, and last, but not least, Aughavanagh—the mountain home of the man whose life I am dealing with to-night—and all these glens and hills are thick with Irish history.

This rocky fastness sheltered Feagh McHugh O'Byrne. In these valleys by the coast Richard the Second lost his army and his crown. Along that coast road to the south marched Cromwell to the sack of Wexford. There, too, passed the unfortunate James in flight from the Boyne. In that deep Glen of Malure Lord Grey de Wilton saw his army cut to pieces. Within these big brown hills '98 made its last desperate stand. Over yonder to the north Henry Grattan had his home. Beyond the dip of the Eagles' Mountain Edmund Burke learned his school lessons.

Geologists have told us how these Irish mountains were built up.

There occurred, they say, in some long ago age of earth's infancy, vast waves of force moving over the molten surface of our planet. Sometimes this irresistible pressure came from the south, at other times it pressed the boiling elements from the west or east, crumpling together the mixed masses of volcanic or sedimentary matter into the massive ridges which we now call mountains.

The southern impact, we are told, made the mountains of Kerry. The east and west forces formed the lofty ridges and isolated peaks of the Wicklow hills. In those two distinct and separated mountain groups the Great Architect formed, as it were, two sanctuaries into which, in a far future time,

the children of a persecuted race were to retire as into a fortress, there to find partial safety, and breathing time, millions of years later; and it is strange to note that it was in these separated sanctuaries, or resting-places, that two men were to be born, after an enormous lapse of time—one Daniel O'Connell, the other Charles Stewart Parnell—whose destiny it would be to raise up from the dust of ages this old smitten and harrassed people, to unbind their chains, and to undo the work which four hundred years of misgovernment and confiscation had brought upon them. In each group of hill-refugees the lesson of liberty had been the same. You cannot tame the mountain top. Men who tread upon rocks and breathe the air that blows over heather must grow freedom in their blood. Sea and sky and crag are insubordinates. The winds that sweep them cannot crawl or creep. They storm and strike.

The old Irish called many of these swelling summits "paps"—the name had deeper meaning than they dreamt of. These mountain breasts suckled in dark times the orphans of liberty. Without them those orphans had grown up slaves; by and by some of them will emancipate their chained brethren in the low lands.

Parnell had not belonged to the race of the unfortunates. His blood was neither Celtic nor Catholic. It was English and Protestant. I doubt, indeed, if he had been differently bred and taught it would have been possible to have been exactly what he was. He belonged to the class

which had represented ascendancy for so many generations. He was born to lead. He was a gentleman to the tips of his fingers. He was of the coolest courage, and of a foresight which saw farther even than the range of vision which his mountain top commanded. He saw Ireland on one side and England on the other, and he knew the depths of the seas that lay between them, and the strength and direction of the currents and cross-currents that swayed them. He was under no delusion as to the gratitude which is expected from friends, or about the honour which is sometimes looked for from enemies. He flattered no man. He never stooped to conquer. I remember when once riding with him among the mountains near Aughavanagh we came to a cross roads, at which a group of people had assembled to see him pass. Hat in hand the men stood by the roadside. One among them was more exuberant in his greetings than were the others. Parnell took no notice of the group. He was talking about the possibility of detecting lameness in horses by a certain movement of the animal's ears while the disease was still in an incipient stage. He did not alter his conversation in the least as the curtseying and the cap-lifting went on. When we had passed the group a man who was riding with us whispered to me: "The fellow who was waving his hat so vigorously when the Chief passed has not paid him any rent for the last five years." Had he paid his rent five years in advance Parnell would have treated his salutation precisely the same. He did not take off his coat

for the farmers who took off their hats, not even for the people who had no hats to take off. It was for Ireland he strove.

He did not tell the Irish people that they were the finest peasantry in the world. He told them that they were men, that they had rights, that they should stand up for these rights, and that they should not beg or cringe for them. He had the hardest work to do that has fallen to the lot of any man to attempt in the Ireland of our time—it was to plant the Irish peasant on Irish soil, and to bring back the Irish Parliament to College Green.

He knew that there was one great dominating factor always present in the relations between the two countries. He knew that justice, truth, reason, right and honour had weighed light in the scale when against these high-sounding names stood the single fact of possession. He knew that law could become the handmaid of privilege, that power and purse were co-equal terms, and while no man had a clearer inbred knowledge that the silk purse could never be made out of the sow's ear, so no politician ever lived who realised more fully that purse material mattered nothing in politics if the coin of the whole hog's head was poured into the coffers of any cause.

The question before Parnell was this—

What power have I at command to beat down this power of purse, this power of beer, this fortress of possession, this citadel of privilege? If abstract right and justice could suffice to set wrong right, and to overthrow the wrongdoer, then there had

never been wrong or injustice in the world. But where could this strength be looked for in Ireland to cast down these giants, so long in possession of all the avenues of authority and the seats of power? How could this silent, reserved, unknown young gentleman by any possibility of fortune hope even to shake the fabric which had been slowly cementing its enormous weight above the entire social foundations of Irish economic and political life.

Such was the struggle which Parnell had to face in the latter half of the decade of the seventies, in the last century, when he entered Parliament as Member for Meath.

This decade of the 'seventies seemed to men a bright and pleasant period of convalescence for Ireland. Things looked placid in the political world. Prices were good, and English politics, taking their cue from prices, seemed to be sinking into a condition of easy contentment, if not of positive indifference. Even the London *Times* wrote hopefully of the Irish prospect. "Political excitement had all but died out," it said. "There is no longer the agitation which convulsed the country in days gone by." These statements read curiously now. But the strangest part of them was their truth. The Franco-German war had thrown a flood of gold into England, and all men and parties were genially congratulating each other, sunning themselves in the glow of the golden harvest which the misfortunes of neighbours had caused to grow and garner in England.

It was in this sedate, well-regulated, and

eminently self-satisfied and respectable society of English political life that Parnell found himself a member in the middle 'seventies—a silent watcher, a quiet, unobtrusive listener, but one, nevertheless, wakeful and watchful, alert, suspicious, resentful; intent upon mastering the rules and the manœuvres of this new battle-field, and determined to make it the lever by which he would upset, in spite of itself, the giant injustices of his own people.

The greatest French writer of the last century has said of England that nothing had impressed him more in the study of English life than "the hypocricies of her pretended national history." That sentence showed that Victor Hugo had examined English political life down to what might be called the bed-rock of her old Devonian system.

In England the substance is easily forgotten in the name. Almost the first words uttered by Parnell in the House of Commons were a protest against this name-pretence. A Minister had said something about the extraordinary delusions which seemed to be current among the Irish Members regarding the agitation for the liberation of "the Manchester murderers." At once a cry of "No, no," uttered by a single member, struck the ear of the House by a sharp and defiant note, new to the assembly. It was Parnell who had spoken that clear, interjected negative—the first note of defence and defiance which was soon to find repetition on platform and in Parliament.

The men who, ten years before, had suffered death at Manchester, and who were known as the

Manchester murderers, had not committed murder in the moral sense of that term. The law which condemned them as murderers had acted in the same spirit of pretence which the great French thinker had found to be an underlying factor in English history. When called on with loud and angry vehemence to withdraw his exclamation, Parnell rose and said clearly and without trace of passion—"I wish to say as publicly as I can that I do not believe, and never shall believe, that any murder was committed at Manchester."

Now, when more than thirty years have passed since that incident occurred, which grouped so much character into so few words, we can ask from what point of view did this young protestor regard the Irish question and the political world of that day, and again, what plan of action had he formed by which he might hope to leave Ireland better than he had found her?

Like all great conceptions, Parnell's view and plan were extremely simple.

From his point of view all the evils that had befallen Ireland—all her misfortunes—the wrongs that oppressed her—even the mental or moral failings that might belong to her people—had had their origin and their support in this identical Parliamentary Institution, of which he was by courtesy or custom an honourable member. The King had had nothing to say to this long tragedy of his country's disaster. It was the Parliament of England which for two or three hundred years had been pre-eminently the Parliament of the Possessor,

the Parliament of the Monopoliser, and of the Money-lender, that had been wholly and entirely the author, actor, cause, and creator of the entire fabric of his country's disaster. That, in a dozen words, was the heart of the situation as it presented itself to the mind of this young man, and no man in our time has ever been better able to get at, and to grasp, the heart of a situation than Charles Stewart Parnell.

But it was easier to find the cause of the disease that afflicted Ireland than to frame or formulate any plan or purpose by which this all-surrounding enemy could be met and defeated. The enemy of Ireland was supreme in his own House. He was rendered doubly supreme through the respect which long tradition had conferred, the renown which history had confirmed, the reverence which an unbroken record of legislative life had instinctively caused all peoples to accord him. All these things Parnell estimated only at the precise value of the resistance they could offer him. Believing that the origin of the evils of Ireland lay in the House of Commons, he could neither respect nor reverence nor bow down as to a fetish before the source and centre of that evil. To him the House of Commons was only the tangible, visible incarnation of the poverty, the wreck, and the ruin of his native land. He did more than dislike it. He hated it.

Parnell was by nature, and in the highest meaning of the word, a despot. He regarded the House of Commons in much the same sense as Carlyle

and Ruskin and a dozen other great thinkers have looked upon it. The *Seers* have ever looked with doubt and distrust upon deliberative assemblies which devote months to talk and hours to action. It is the *sightseers* of the human race who regard them with the most profound admiration.

Parnell did not care for sights or sounds. His biographer tells us that it was the verdict and not the speech his hero thought of. The speech might be worthy of a Demosthenes or a Cicero, but the verdict was a matter of votes, and he had only to look at the faces of the worthy law-makers who trooped into the division lobbies to realise that the votes were quite as likely to come from a Podsnap or a Murdstone as from a Colonel Newcome or a General Gordon. "It is not by a smooth speech," he once said to a man who, in this early time, had delivered the usual eloquent discourse upon Home Rule to a half empty House, "it is not by smooth speeches that you will get anything done here. They are far too comfortable." He would make them uncomfortable—that was the key-note of his plan of battle. It suited the man in other ways to take that course. If this assembly was proud of its privileges and jealous of its traditions, he was as proud and as haughty as the best of them. His family had had a splendid record. Poets and Statesmen had been among them. One of his direct ancestors had borne the name of the "incorruptible Parnell." In the correspondence of the Duke of Wellington you will find a letter written at the time Sir Arthur Wellesley was Chief Secretary

for Ireland, and, I may add, was almost entirely conducting the policy of his office through the admitted acts of bribery; you will find a letter in which the plan of the campaign of corruption is laid out at length for the benefit of the Prime Minister and his colleagues, Lords Eldon, Camden and Castlereagh—and in that letter those words occur: "With Mr. Parnell we have no chance." No chance, no hope, in him for the corruptionist, the monopoliser, the money-lender, the usurer; for those were the things that underlay the whole frame-work of the Government of 1807, and again, in altered form, but in substance the same, the Government of Lord Beaconsfield seventy years later.

These, then, I take it, were the standpoints from which Parnell judged the situation. The Houses of Parliament were the representatives of certain forces in the community from which the masses of the Irish people were practically excluded. For many generations social and economic legislation had been directed almost entirely to the benefit of the landowner, the mortgagee, the possessor of property. It was nothing new in the world. It was older than the Bible. It was as old as Cain. The brand of that individual had been removed from it by the resources of civilisation, that was all.

It is curious to read what other times and men had said or written about these old things before they had put on their new clothes. "Whoever eats up, robs, or steals the nourishment of another commits as great a murder, as far as in him lies, as

he who starves a man or utterly undoes him; such does the usurer, sitting the while safe on his stool when he ought to be rather hanging on the gallows. Little thieves are put in the stocks; great thieves go flaunting in gold and silk." So wrote Martin Luther. "The rich are robbers," said St. Chrysostom. "Opulence is always the product of theft," wrote St. Jerome. "Those who make private property of the gift of God pretend in vain to be innocent. For in thus retaining the subsistence of the poor they are the murderers of those who die daily for want of it." Thus thundered the greatest of the Pontiffs, Gregory the Great. I quote these few pronouncements of illustrious men for the purpose of showing that if Charles Stewart Parnell held strong opinions upon social and economic questions in Ireland, and on the laws through the operation of which some millions of his countrymen had perished miserably of famine and fever, or had fled across the ocean during the short tenure of his own life, he was not altogether in a bad company of belief on these matters.

Before Parnell had been a member of the House of Commons twelve months he had found the secret by which the machine which had evolved so much destruction for Ireland might at least be brought to a standstill.

All the oratory for which his countrymen had been famous for centuries had been entirely useless to reverse the wheels of that machine, or revoke the old edicts. He quickly realised that the part which honest effort at reform could play on this battle-

field of the constitution was infinitesimally small. As a man—and a proud man—he could not beg from these people—even for Ireland. If they would not give him what he wanted, then he would see whether it was possible to prevent them doing anything for Engand. It was a simple programme—a straight fight. There were to be no buttons on the foils in this new game, which was soon called "obstruction." All previous preaching and protesting had been child's play. Isaac Butt had produced Bill after Bill, based upon most moderate proposals, for remedial legislation in Irish land and Irish government. They had been put quietly and contemptuously aside as the proposals of children are often negatived by their elders. This business of begging for redress had gone on too long. Parnell had been a noted cricketer. If the wickets were not falling, then change the bowler.

Form, rule, etiquette, respect for tradition, all these things had been tried and found useless. A stronger hand, a sterner brain, a more intrepid captain, were needed. The Irish question was a very old one. It was no academic matter. It was the life or the death of a people, and that people one of the oldest on the earth, certainly the oldest in Europe—a people whose civilisation went back through two thousand years of time, who knew the things we call poetry and art, and eloquence and arms, when the now predominant partner was chiefly concerning himself with the exact colour in which he would adorn his pristine person on some particular festival.

It was often said of Parnell that he knew little of Irish history. Of one thing I am certain. If he did not know the items he knew the sum, and the sum was *Confiscation*.

If you examine English history carefully you will be struck by the prominent part which plunder has played in it, and how popular as heroes the raider and the plunderer have ever been—a sentiment which is rather growing than decreasing, I think, in our times; certainly it is not yet extinct. Shakespeare tells us that Bardolph, after a long career of successful pillage in France, was finally hanged because he had so far forgotten his lesson of the ethical exemptions of his day as to steal a pix from the church at Harfleur. Had Bardolph flourished in the reign of the Eighth Henry instead of that of the Fifth he might have found that in appropriating the sacred pix he was not disqualifying himself for the Chancellorship of England, or even for the Archbishopric of Canterbury.

The opening year of the new decade of the 'eighties saw Parnell the leader of the Irish Party in the House of Commons. Butt had passed away. He had been the founder of Home Rule. He had stood for Ireland through many dark and almost hopeless days. New necessities had arisen; other method of redress had to be tried. A sudden change had taken place in the conditions of the Irish problem. The sun of the 'seventies had set in gloom; hunger had once more appeared; the very life of the Irish peasant was at stake. The question was not whether you could grow a free

race of people through laws made by themselves in Ireland; but it was could you grow any people whatever in a land which was perennially liable to be swept by hunger as it had been swept over and over again by the same spectre? This spectre—famine—was again threatening the entire western sea-board of the island. In 1876 Ireland had four million tons of potatoes to give her people. In 1879 she had one million. The barometer of eviction rose as the yield of the root fell. Everywhere the harvest lay soddened and ungathered under the rain of pitiless skies. "Black '47" seemed about to be repeated as the last month of the once sunny 'seventies closed. But it was not destined to come to that pass. In 1846-7 the land was rent in twain by divisions between old and young Ireland, and an aged and broken man, once a giant, still held, or tried to hold, the helm. In 1879-80 a young man of extraordinary strength and determination had in a couple of years forced himself to the front. The rush of his impetuous onset had swept into his following a host of hitherto warring and jarring parties and personalities, and he and they stood in solid square of strength between a hungry peasantry and their enemies.

Then began the land war—a bitter, relentless struggle. Old, half-forgotten, scenes reappeared. The rent could not be found. The driver, the bailiff, were abroad. In opposition came the moonlighter, the blackened face, the threatening letter. Captain Boycott and Bence Jones on one side, Rory of the Hills and Captain Moonlight on

the other. And the scene of this strange tragedy was laid in Europe, and the time was the end of the 19th century!

Now, if you ask me, what was the real force behind all this strange work? What was the secret prompting power, whose hand and voice are hidden from the public eye and ear, that power whose existence is only visible to the historian years after all the movers in the drama have gone to their graves? I will tell you in a few words. The usurer was behind it all—the man about whom I have just given you a few quotations (I could have given many more), which ranged from Pope Gregory the Great to Martin Luther.

People wrote and spoke about landlords and Government and magistrates and police, and many other parties and persons. Of course, most of these people were there, outwardly and bodily visible; but behind them was the money-lender, the "gombeen man," the usurer.

Somebody has said that for practical purposes the inhabitants of Ireland might be divided into two classes—spendthrifts, or sporting men, and gombeen men. I think there is something in the division. The sporting man is the complement of the gombeen man—sport is the usurers' best customer. Show me the betting man and the sporting man generally and I will show you the man in debt and in difficulties. Now, the man in debt was the Irish landlord, and he was in debt nine times out of ten not because he was a landlord, but because he was a sporting spendthrift. He was living on

a narrow margin—the small sum that remained between the rent he received from the tenant and the interest which he paid the gombeen man. When that narrow margin went the landlord was in a worse plight than the tenant. I do not know whether he was ashamed to beg, but I do know that he was unable to work. He could sit a saddle over a six-barred gate, but he would have died of starvation before he could have made even a three-barred one. The sole animal he couldn't bridle was his own extravagance. This being said, he was, for the rest, not a bad fellow. On the contrary, he was by nature a good-hearted creature. Never quite grown up, forced by the habits of his life and environment into the grasp of the usurer, and driven by that individual back upon the peasant as an evictor, a house-leveller, and the rest of it, he was, in fact, only the handle of the knife in the grasp of Shylock. That wily personage was in our time as in the days of Martin Luther, "sitting safe on his stool," the object of the same "honour and worship" at the hands of British Governments, and of the London Press (of which he was largely the owner) as when the German thinker of strong thoughts had declared him "worthy of the gallows" four centuries earlier.

Early in 1880 the Liberal Party came into power by a large majority. As has too often been the case in their history, they assumed office in April of that year, ignorant of the most pressing of the problems before them. Entirely in the dark as to the condition of Ireland, they were equally

oblivious of the state of South Africa. In both countries they blundered hopelessly. They showed neither conscience in one land nor courage in the other. Nemesis came quickly. South Africa was soon in revolt. Ireland was seething in angry agrarian revolution.

The pity of it all was great. Like the saddest things in life, it need not have been.

As we can see it now, it could so easily have been different. One right resolve, a little turn of the handle of thought, and the barque of Ireland's fortune, perhaps even of England's destiny, might have sped upon her course, bound for happier havens.

In the spring of 1880 a great opportunity lay open to Mr. Gladstone. Would he settle this Irish land question once and for ever? He had come into power largely through the support of the Irish vote in England. The Irish vote in Ireland was his if he would rise to the level of the occasion and deal at once with the land question from top to bottom. But he would not, or he could not, do it. Such opportunity comes only once to men. The new Parliament met in the end of April. Ireland was practically ignored. It was the old story. The exploitation of Irish wrongs is a useful weapon when a political party is in opposition; but when they enter office it can be relegated to the reserve armoury to be kept stored and oiled. It might be wanted again in four or five years. A half-hearted Act of Compensation for Disturbance was introduced in the middle of the session. It passed the

Commons only to be thrown out in the Lords by a huge majority.

Here was the opportunity, and here began the trouble of the nation, and the waning of Mr. Gladstone's power. The anger of Ireland was intense. The people were in no mood to be trifled with. They felt that they had a right to the first and the best from Mr. Gladstone's hand. He would do nothing for them. The Bulgar, the Ionian, the Tuscan, full fed, prosperous, olive-fatted peoples who paid no rents and lived in beautiful climates—these peoples he could champion and travel the country in their cause; but for this starving Irish Celt, shivering on the verge of the grey and stormy Western Ocean, he could do nothing. Well, they would do something for themselves. They had a leader at last, and he soon gave them a purpose and a plan. It was the unwritten, inborn motto of his own nature. "Hold your hold." Resist eviction, stand up to the gombeen man, smite the smiter, let the world see how easily an English Liberal party can be paralysed when in power, no matter how bravely it may have carried itself in opposition.

When the season passed without remedial legislation the course was cleared for disaster. The year '80 closed in gloom. It was war all along the line. "It rained evictions; it rained outrages," wrote the biographer of Parnell, and the biographer of Lord Randolph Churchill repeats the expression. It would have been nearer the truth to say that the rain of evictions had turned into hail-stones of

outrage. Between ten thousand and eleven thousand persons were evicted in that dark year.

"Only seven persons were actually murdered during the winter," writes Mr. Winston Churchill. If the sentence is to be read as indicative of surprise it would not be unnatural. Had a similar multitude of persons been thrown out of their homes in France or Germany it is probable the number of murders would have been many more.

While this work was going on that great man, General Charles Gordon (exact opposite of everything most cherished by the usurer and gombeener), visited Ireland. He saw all; he said what should be done; he told people what he saw. "The state of our fellow-countrymen in the parts I have named," he wrote in the *Times*, "is worse than that of any people in the world, let alone Europe. The people are patient beyond belief, loyal, but at the same time broken-spirited and desperate, living on the verge of starvation, in places where we would not keep cattle." Then he said you must buy out the landlords, and put the peasants on the soil under conditions that will let them live. Twenty-three years had to pass before the advice of this honest man will be listened to. Meanwhile, as a reward for his interference in Irish affairs, he was banished to a distant island, and from that banishment may be dated the beginning of the tragedy which had its final consummation in Khartoum four years later. It is sometimes a costly pastime to stone your prophets.

Parnell flung himself into the struggle with all

the energy of his nature. The moment had come, and he knew it. I do not find that any other man of that day had a similar knowledge of his own time. Man in life is like a ship at sea. He knows the port from which he has come, and that to which he is going; but the precise place at which he is standing at the moment, that is a very nice piece of calculation and observation. Parnell always knew that point, he knew it by the instinct which we call genius. He had not to ponder the question. "Captain of his nation," he was neither abashed by the sense of his own youth (he was only thirty-four), nor was he awed by the antiquity, the vast tradition, or the historic renown of the scene in which the conflict had to be carried on.

Despite the tremendous odds against him, moral, political, and economic, there was no rashness in his audacity, no precipitation in his enterprise. He knew his men, as he knew his time. The great writer whom I have already quoted has said that "with Shakespeare England is no longer so much like Carthage." The part of England that was opposing Parnell had very little of Shakespeare in it, and a good deal of Carthage; but there was this great difference now. Hannibal was to be on the Irish side in this fight with the modern punic power.

I know of nothing finer than the courage and effort with which this political Hannibal flung himself into the service of his country.

The measure of a man's worth in the world is the measure of the service he can give his fellow men.

What may be called the surplus of the work, thought, and service he gives to others, that is the credit standing to him in the Book of Life. How much of his life-effort did this man give to Ireland? He gave it all—body and soul, brain and blood—through the years from 1875, when he began his work, down to that dark day of disaster in 1891, when, speaking his last words to Irish ears, the tall figure, still so regal in its desolation, tottered and fell to earth, never to speak to Ireland again.

He gave everything to Ireland; his entire fortune, his ancestral home, his time and his pastimes, his thought, his life—all for Ireland.

He did not speak about this service, he did not parade it, or prate of it—this silent, strong-souled man.

Most of us imagine that Ireland is our's. She is not. We are Ireland's. We belong to her, and no man ever belonged to her more entirely than Parnell. I must go back.

The year '81 opened amid darker portents. Coercion was to precede redress. The Habeas Corpus was to be suspended before the right to exist could be yielded. On the 28th January, 1881, the Prime Minister began to adumbrate his plans of coercion to benches filled by his old enemies, who howled their rapturous satisfaction as this former apostle of freedom flung himself deeper into their ranks. Everything now ran in the groove which the Eastern Statesman, who had presided over the destinies of the last Government, had so accurately foreseen when he quitted office in 1880. The

Liberal Party and their illustrious leader had fallen headlong into the Irish trap which their predecessors had laid and baited for them just one year earlier. More than one thousand persons were locked up in prison without charge or trial under the unfortunate title of "suspects." Troops were poured into Ireland. The missile known as "buckshot" was issued to the police for use against the people, and so completely had the new Government been out-manœuvred by their former opponents, that although the idea of using this fresh form of persuasion upon recalcitrant peasants had been devised by the former Chief Secretary for Ireland, the title of "Buckshot" was speedily fastened upon the unfortunate Mr. Forster, to remain an abiding possession with him, as long as his name shall abide in the memory of the land he ruled so ill, and yet wished so well to.

A Land Act followed coercion later in the session, but all the harm that could be done had already been effected. The prisons were full of "suspects," outrages continued, "scenes" in the House of Commons were almost of continuous occurrence. Parnell was the guiding spirit of the storm. Never had any political personage sprung so suddenly into the first place. "He stood alone; he was the centre of everything," said Lord Cowper, the Viceroy, speaking of his great antagonist in after years. "He had no second. No one at all near him." But if there were no seconds there were many thirds, men of high ability, strong convictions, and an almost inexhaustible fund of energy

and labour-power. Their leader possessed in a striking form—that gift which belongs only to men of the first order—the power of conferring greatness upon lesser mortals when they act as his subordinates or supporters.

It is not from friends and admirers that I like to hear or to read of this man. I prefer to see him through the glasses of his enemies—through the abuse they heaped upon him, the names they found for him, and the efforts they made to compass his destruction. Rebel, tyrant, murderer, robber, traitor. He treated it all with superb disdain. Nothing of censure or praise or blame stirred him to defence, to thanks, or to reproach. Yet there was nothing studied in this impassive acceptation. He did not appear to be conscious of the things other people lay stress upon. It was said that in this silent aloofness he was more English than Irish. It was neither one nor the other. It was American, of that type which characterised so many leaders on the rival sides in the great civil war between North and South. Parnell was the Stonewall Jackson of Irish politics.

The Land Act of 1881, far-reaching in principle though it was, made no change in the position of parties. The rival forces had run too far on their opposite courses to be easily recalled to order, or brought to heel through favour of concession, however ample it might be. Indeed, if the events of the past years were to be fairly judged, it might have been said that the Irish people had first been flogged and put to bed because they had had no

supper, and that next morning, while their backs were still smarting from the whipping, and they were given a not too bountiful breakfast, they were expected to sit up and sing: "Let us be thankful to our masters across the Channel."

The land strife continued; the League spread its ramifications deeper through the country. The year '81 ran its course. The issue had now become almost a personal one between the Chief Secretary, Mr. Forster, and Parnell as to the side which should administer, or rather control, the working of the Land Act.

Parnell had practically ordered the League to see that no members of that organisation had recourse to the new Land Courts until certain test cases had been first decided. This action was followed by Mr. Gladstone's speech at Leeds, where the threat about "the resources of civilisation not being exhausted," was used. The arrest of the Irish leader had already been determined upon by Mr. Foster, and it was hoped that the trailing of the coat at Leeds by the Prime Minister would cause further excuse for that strong measure to be given. Parnell was not slow to answer the challenge. Two days later he spoke at Wexford in strong and masterful terms. If there was anything in the speech at which the law could catch, the offence lay in the bare and biting statement of historical and contemporary truth that was in it. Later in the day, at Wexford, someone asked Parnell if he thought it likely he would be arrested because of the speech? "I may be arrested at any time," he

answered, "a speech is not necessary. Old 'Buckshot' thinks that by making Ireland a jail he will settle the Irish question." "And suppose they arrest you, Mr. Parnell," went on the inquirer, "have you any instructions to give us? Who will take your place?" "If I am arrested," said Parnell, very deliberately, "Captain Moonlight will take my place." It was too true. Parnell was arrested in Dublin on the 13th October and lodged in Kilmainham prison. Immediately after the arrest Captain Moonlight emerged from the clouds and the rocks of Kerry, Connemara, and a dozen other places. A novel feature also appeared. The women came out, and, as usual in such cases, they went far beyond the men. "I only consider the position serious for my troops," said a veteran marshal in the Peninsular War, "when the women begin to throw their crockery at us from the house-tops." A good deal of crockery began to fly in Ireland when the ladies of the Land League heard their hero had been arrested. The country was soon on the verge of anarchy.

After six months' detention in prison Parnell was liberated under the arrangement or understanding known as the Kilmainham Treaty. There were three interests involved in this treaty. Parnell's health was suffering, the country was suffering, the Government was suffering most of all. The continuous spectacle of Liberalism believing itself compelled to play the part of Autocracy was a position of infinite harm to liberty all over the world. That was what had been happening to this most unfor-

tunate of Governments ever since they had come into office two years earlier. How futile it was to preach freedom, and human rights, and a dozen other reforms in Bulgaria or Anatolia or Macedonia, when here at home in Ballaghadereen or in Annamoe or at Macroom people were being sent to prison in scores for mere suspicion of constructive crime, or under a statute dated in the reign of some Plantagenet King whose dust had been mouldering in Westminster Abbey for seven centuries. The worst tragedy was still to come. This release had come too late. On May 4th Parnell was in his place in Parliament, pale, with the pallor of the prison, but cool and collected as ever.

His speech, following that of Mr. Gladstone, was full of quiet dignity—there was almost a sound of hope in it. If the Government would even at this late hour deal with the arrears of rent which three bad seasons had accumulated much might be done to restore peace and order in Ireland. Two days later the new Chief Secretary, Lord Frederick Cavendish, who had arrived in Ireland that day, and Mr. Burke, the Under Secretary, fell under the knives of a band of desperate miscreants in the Phœnix Park. Nothing so bad had happened before in Irish history. The country was plunged into deeper night than ever. Coercion came again along the old track. It was inevitable that it should now do so. Parnell was paralysed. "No act perpetrated in Ireland in all the struggles of fifty years had so stained the name of Ireland as this cowardly and unprovoked assassination," he

wrote. In his despair he determined to abandon public life, and was only dissuaded from doing so by strong opposition from many quarters.

These feelings of depression soon passed, and the old fighting spirit awoke again. The thing he had fought so hard for was there still. Its foundations, indeed, were set ten thousand fathoms deeper than any passing event, however tragic or horrible, could reach. The principles that were at stake in this strife were old as man himself—old almost as the hills among which he, Parnell, had learnt them—older than the Ireland which had been their battle-field for so many centuries. Why had it been left to him in the end of this 19th century to be the leader of the fight in this cause of the peasant against the usurer and the monopolist? Was this unfortunate, isolated, detached piece of earth-structure, called Ireland, to remain sole spot on God's globe wherein the right of human living was to be interpreted in favour of the privileged few, and denied always to the miserable many?

What hypocrisy were these high-sounding platitudes about political moralities—the sanctities of solicitors' parchments—when all the time the elemental and fundamental rights of the human race were being outraged and uprooted.

"For long years it had lasted," wrote Carlyle of another people living under like conditions, "but the time came. Feather-brain—whom no reasoning and no pleading could touch—the glare of the fire-brand had to illuminate—consider it! Look at it! The widow is gathering nettles for her

children's dinner. A perfumed Seigneur, delicately lounging in the Eil de Boeuf, hath an alchemy whereby he will extract from her the third nettle and call it rent and law. Such an arrangement must end. But oh ! most fearful is such an ending. Let those to whom God in His great mercy hath granted time and space prepare another and a milder one."

The work that Parnell had been striving to accomplish in Ireland was to keep that third nettle, or shall we say the third potato, for the widow and her children.

I pass quickly through the tunnel of the years '83 and '84 in the history of the movement, and come to 1885.

It found the Irish Israelites still in the desert. They had crossed the Red Sea, but the promised land was not in sight. Some manna had fallen to them, but for the rest the wanderings had been more or less in a circle.

Personal troubles of a financial nature had meanwhile come upon the leader, probably accentuated, if not caused, by the action of political enemies. A mortgage of £13,000 held on the Wicklow property was foreclosed. The money could not be found. The Irish people subscribed it three times over. From various points of the compass forces adverse to the man who was fighting so hard a battle for the life of the Irish peasant began to show themselves. Old English Catholicism had never been particularly friendly to Ireland or to her people. The interference of

Rome was invoked in 1883, '84, and '85 by the Monopolisers, as it had been invoked in 1155 by the Second Henry, and in the days of the Bruce by the Second Edward, and later by the Eighth Henry. Time makes little change in some things.

At last came the dawn of what seemed to be brighter days. The thing called Home Rule was no better or no worse than it had been for five, or ten, or a hundred years before. But a General Election occurred in the end of 1885, and lo! the two great English parties, which for one hundred years had used Ireland as a football, or a shuttlecock, between them, found themselves in so near a balance of power that it seemed to them that, like two students in a German University duel, they would only be able to scratch each other's noses in any Parliamentary fight in which they might engage.

Parnell held the balance—he could make or unmake either party.

The bidding for Home Rule at once began. The world was carefully told that Mr. Gladstone was in deep meditation. Lord Salisbury declared in Wales that Federation (or Home Rule) was one of the questions of the future. Men who had been smaller ministerial luminaries on either side began to sound the Irish leader, to suggest, to angle, to bid for his support.

I have compared Parnell to the great Carthaginian leader in the wholeness of the service he gave his country, and in his extraordinary grasp of occasion and quickness of resource. At this point

the parallel ceases, and the name of another great leader, this time of Celtic blood, comes to my mind. Truly had this modern Brennus led his Gauls to the foot of the Capitol in London, but the garrison of Threadneedle Street need not despair—the geese will be there still—only this time they will be marching with Brennus!

I need not delay over the fight that followed. No one can have forgotten it. But there was an incident in it upon which Irishmen should ponder deeply and for long. You will find it set forth in detail in a letter written in 1885 by the late Lord Randolph Churchill, and published in the life of that remarkable man by his son, and I think that every Irishman who has at heart the welfare of his country owes a debt of gratitude to Mr. Churchill for having given publicity to that letter. At the end of this document—this glass window into the soul of the Tory Party of the time—there occurs the following summing up of the situation as it then struck the acute mind of the writer:—

"These are the main lines of a policy," he says, "towards Ireland which will secure a great amount of Parliamentary and public concurrence, and will, if vigorously and boldly followed, bring about inevitably the disintegration of Mr. Parnell's party. The great size of this party is its chief danger. Its members are open to various influences, jealousy of each other and of Parnell, want of funds, ministerial influences, priestly influences, and last, but not least, the capricious, unstable, and, to some extent, treacherous character of the Irish nature."

I do not quote this document because of its cynical criticism of the Irish powers, lay and ecclesiastic, of the time, nor because of its sinister estimate of the forces which were then supposed to be throbbing as one heart, and moving as one man, under the banner of the Irish leader, but I give it because I think it should remain a warning to us never to be forgotten. This carefully-reasoned utterance of the best brain among the Tory Party of twenty-five years ago should also be remembered because it gives unconsciously and unwittingly a measure of Parnell's real height as he stood in the eyes of his enemies, and of the world at that moment.

We can see there as in a mirror how loftily he towered above all competitors, how he was feared and dreaded by his enemies, and by the enemies of Ireland—how bitter, how vindictive, was their opposition to him; and alas! we can see, too, how few and feeble were the resources he had behind him in this tremendous fight to which he had given his life.

I did not come here to-night to sow one seed of fresh discord in the minds of man or woman, or to kindle again a dying ember from the old fires of that sorrowful time. Peace be to the ashes of friends and foe alike. In the intervening years the foes have suffered even more than the friends. An inexorable fate has pursued them, big and little. The wolves of the English world of political finance to whom he was finally flung have, in their turn, devoured themselves, and in the madness of

their South African policy they have almost devoured their country. Had Ireland stood by this man his words in all human probability would long since have been verified—"that no man, or no body of men, had right or title to mark the boundaries of the march of a nation." Does anybody imagine that had we kept him at the helm Ireland, politically, industrially, socially, and intellectually. would have been as she is to-day?

He alone had it in him to abolish the Boyne. No man in our time had the genius of administration in finer faculty and clearer apprehension. He broke down only to build up again. He cleared the brushwood only to plant the tree. He had constructive genius of the highest order. Above all his art in the science of attack stood that rarest quality of knowing where and when to stop. His was not the reckless onslaught of a Rupert. He did not fight for the sake of fighting. He could call off the squadrons, and propose peace when the victory was won.

Before closing this paper I would speak of an episode in the life of Parnell, of which I happened to be a spectator.

It was in the final scene in the London law court in February, 1889, of the Pigott forgery. The telegraph had kept London on the alert during the midday of the 23rd February, of the slow dragging of the truth from the forger under the terrible examination of the great lawyer, Sir Charles Russell. I went to the court in the vague hope of obtaining admission. The place was packed to

suffocation. "There was no chance of entrance," said the police janitor. "Is Mr. Parnell present?" I asked. "Yes." "Will you take this card to him?" A minute or two later I saw the tall figure coming through the crush. "There is not an inch of space in the public galleries," he said, "but I may wedge you in where I am sitting at the counsels' table." I followed him through the pack to his bench. He asked his solicitor, Mr. Lewis, to make half space for me beside him, and I squeezed into a seat. There was the historic scene set in cramped and clammy compass. The three judges to my left, the narrow table round which the rival counsel were seated, the commanding figure of Sir Charles Russell on the right, and above all, full in front, at the further side of the table, the small witness-box, with the short, bloated, squat figure of Pigott in it, his toad-like face and bull neck streaming with perspiration, as he tried to answer in some shape the merciless questions which, in deep and ringing tones, the great counsel put rapidly to him. The climax had come.

"Take these, sir!" thundered the lawyer, as he handed up to the witness pen and paper, "and write." Then came three or four words in rapid command, and the trembling wretch in the box scribbled as the lesson was dictated. Then the words "hesitancy" and "likelihood" were spoken, and again the witness scribbled. As he wrote I had time to look round the court. Sir Charles Russell stood a commanding figure—his shoulders occasionally touching the high back of the bench

behind him, his face flushed with the intense strain of the examination, a large silk bandana handkerchief in his left hand, his right arm often extended towards the witness, his eyes fixed steadfastly upon him. As the man wrote, the attention of the crowded court became so wrapt that one could hear the scrape of the pen upon the paper. "Give me the paper, sir!" The fatal words were on it, mis-spelt again, as they had been mis-spelt in the forged letter.

And Parnell? He sat there round the angle of the narrow bench, pale, for he was even then suffering from dangerous disease, but quiet, unmoved, unruffled, as though the scene had been the dead picture of a State trial two hundred years ago! No movement of lip or expression of eye, no tightened muscle of hand or arm, to tell that he was the victor over a combination of forces as powerful, as conscienceless, and as cowardly as had ever come together to compass the ruin of one man.

What he thought about it in that great silent heart he spoke a year later in the House of Commons. "You wanted to use this question of the forged letters," he said, "as a political engine. You did not care whether they were forged or not. You knew that it was impossible for us under the circumstances, or for anybody under the circumstances, to prove that they were forgeries. It was a very good question for you to win elections with. It was also a suitable engine to enable you to obtain an enquiry into a much wider field, and very different matters—an enquiry which you never

would have got apart from these infamous productions.

The end was now close at hand. Dark and desolate though it was destined to be, that very darkness made clearer the rifts of character-light which illumined it, and which are certain to grow and broaden in the minds of men as the years run their course. Indeed, it was only when the end came that the inner fires of this great soul, so long suppressed, broke into full flame, revealing the marvellous tenacity of character, and the entire power of the man, and alas! consuming the already frail and sinking body, until the clothes hung looser upon the tall figure, and the white hands grew whiter on the helm, which men, who knew not the vessel's course as he did, were striving to tear from his grasp.

I take a single sentence from that time, and I ask you did ever man condense into fewer words the story of his own unselfish life-struggle, or see with clearer vision into the future, than when he cried: "*Change me to-morrow if you can get my value, but do not sell me for nothing!*" He knew it all then, and we know it all now.

And now, when all these chapters of history are closed, as the life itself is closed, when

> He who waked our sleep,
> Now sleeps his sleep for ever,

what is there still to do? We cannot recall a single hour from that dead past, which seems so wearily long ago, as we look across the years, since he went.

But we can do something—a little thing, and yet

of much moment now, and to our children. We can set up the effigy of this man in our most public place, so that our children's children may see that tall figure and splendid face, as their semblance has been fixed in bronze by the genius of a great artist, and, looking at those proud, defiant features, feel in their hearts a glow of the old fire he kindled so often through the length and breadth of Ireland. And I tell you that if this is not done, and done quickly, we shall deserve, as a people, the epithets of our enemies in the past, and the lasting censures of our friends in the future. Remember that when the martyr is forgotten the cause is lost. But no matter what may happen in the future, let no man say or write that it was Ireland who forgot him. No—not Ireland. She has never forgotten even the lowliest of her dead servants. See! how lovingly she folds them in her embrace; how green she keeps the grass above their graves; how silently her tears fall upon the tombstones that cover them! No. It is not Ireland that will forget him, if he be forgotten. Nor is he dependent upon tombstone or statue for remembrance. I have not come to beg for his memory.

"Nothing can cover his high fame but heaven,
No pyramid set off his memories
But the eternal substance of his greatness,
To which I leave him."

Gordon

1907

More than twenty years ago I was asked to write the life of Charles Gordon for the "English Men of Action" Series.

I had known Gordon in life only as many others of my profession had known him. I had met him during one or two of these short and hurried visits which at intervals he paid to England from long periods of service in remote places. I had visited, or lived, in some of the countries which had been the scenes of his service—that was all. Of the man himself—the mind and soul of the man—I knew next to nothing. Rumour, the gossip of men of the world, spoke of him as a soldier of dauntless daring, who, in China, in the early 'sixties, had achieved a series of remarkable military exploits as the commander of a disciplined Chinese force in the Imperial Chinese service—the rank and file of the force being Chinamen, the officers being European.

By reason of this service, and also, perhaps, as a means of distinguishing his identity from that of so many officers of his name in the British army, he was known generally as "Chinese Gordon"—a soubriquet which was, perhaps, better adapted to catch the ear of the man in the street than to arrest the attention of the man in the study.

Up to the beginning of 1884—that is to say, to

within one short year of his death at Khartoum—that was all that was known of a man who, if I mistake not, will be anxiously enquired about, and within one short year of his death at Khartoum—prominent personages of the 19th century may be forgotten.

The reason of Gordon's being so little known to his contemporaries is easily explained. He had, in the most marked manner, kept himself aloof from the gaze of the public. He shunned publicity; Clubland scarcely knew him. A prodigious writer, he nevertheless was unknown in the magazine and journalistic literature of his time. When at intervals he appeared in London he mixed in none of the literary, scientific, or military circles which centre in the capital. But this aloofness was very far removed from any trace of misanthropy or of pride.

No livelier spirit ever dwelt in human body than in that of Charles Gordon. "Charlie" he was as a cadet at Woolwich in 1850, and "Charlie" Gordon he was thirty-six years later in Khartoum. Through all the striking vicissitudes of life his light-heartedness never left him; and it is of interest to note that while it went far towards explaining his failure with the bureaucratic elements of English Government life, it was also the active principle in his nature, which made him by far the most successful ruler of Eastern and African races that England has probably ever produced.

Early in 1884 events happened which changed the whole tenor of thought and feeling in England

towards this man. Looking back to that year, it seems difficult to me to realise that almost a quarter of a century now lies between us and that moment. The generation that knew Gordon in the flesh is already nearly gone; and I have to bear that fact in mind, so that I may not fall into the error of imagining that the knowledge which was then the property of the English-speaking peoples is still in their possession.

We will begin at the beginning.

Charles George Gordon was born in Woolwich on January 28th, 1833. He came of a family of soldiers and of a clan famous for its fighting men. His father had fought at Maida, his grandfather at Quebec, his great-grandfather at Prestonpans. Beyond these three distinct generations the family line merges into a vast blank of chronic warfare—war in the armies of Russia and Sweden, in the Imperial service of Germany, in the taking off of Wallenstein, in the civil wars of Montrose and Huntley; off into mistier times, when clan smote clan and raided castle and hamlet, in all the glens and straiths of Northern Scotland.

As a boy and youth there was little to mark Charlie Gordon from other boys of his age, excepting, perhaps, that he was something more the boy than most boys. He broke glass windows in the Royal Arsenal, where his father then lived. He and his brothers rang bells at doors, pushed a smaller brother inside; disturbed the lectures of some of the gravest of the professors by throwing handfuls of small shot up at the windows, &c.

In 1848 he entered the Royal Military Academy as a cadet, and remained in the Academy four years. Here there was, of course, a less exuberant display of youthful vivaciousness, but enough of it to bring down on his head the wrath of authority, which on this occasion was centred in the person of a veteran of the Peninsular War, who, like Tom Hood's immortal pensioner, "had left a leg in Badajoz's breaches." Certainly the appointment of a one-legged veteran to be dispenser of scholastic discipline among British youths of from fifteen to eighteen years of age does not strike one as a very judicious selection—the animal boy, among his numerous bumps, has not got that of reverence, and even the memory of Badajoz or Ciudad Rodrigo would, generally speaking, prove but sorry incentives to respect in face of the peculiarities of gait inseparable from a wooden leg—unless, indeed, it could have been used in the hand, and in a sense entirely at variance with its proper purpose. But, be this as it may, Charley Gordon's early career unquestionably suffered from incompatability of temper between schoolmaster and student, which developed, as Gordon thought in after life, out of this wooden leg. He was "put back," as it was called, six months for his commission.

He was appointed to the Royal Engineers in June, 1852.

Two years and a half pass, and he is in the thick of the trench work before Sebastopol. The Russian winter is in its depth. It is New Year's Day, 1855. The first of Russia's generals,

Janvier, has just taken command. The second Fèvrier, will come in due course. The finest army that ever left our shores is dying of cold and famine, within five miles of a seaport, and at only a fortnight's steaming distance from England. The search for food has taken the foremost place. "No one seems to interest himself about the siege," he writes in his first letter from Balaklava, "all appear to be engaged in foraging expeditions for grub, &c."

A week later he is at the front, busy with working parties, batteries, and sorties. He delights in the business—never a complaint nor a murmur. "I have got a splendid outfit and two leather vests and drawers," he writes. "I am very glad that I shall not require any assistance from my father, as I am now going to hand him enough to cover my expenses." Quite a picnic, you would fancy from the tone of his letter, if in the next sentence or two you did not come on this:—"Lieutenant Daunt and another officer of the 60th regiment were frozen to death last night, and two officers of the 93rd regiment were smothered with charcoal."

On February 2nd everything is again put in rosy colours to the mother. "I assure you, my dear mother," he writes, "I could not be more comfortable in England. I have a double tent, and have dug out the bottom of it, so that it is quite warm." Nevertheless, there is a foot of snow on the ground, and the icy blast from the Euxine is sweeping like a scythe over the bleak hill-side where this tent is pitched, six hundred feet above the sea-level. I

would like to dwell upon this siege of Sebastopol, upon the life of the young man which was here beginning to unfold its inner soul; but the road I have to travel is too long to allow of doing so, and I shall close this Crimean chapter in Gordon's life by quoting the words of one who met him there for the first time—Lord Wolseley. Speaking of Gordon, he says:—"We were friends drawn together by ties never formulated by words. In these material days of money-grubbing, when the teaching of Christianity is little practised, and the spirit of chivalry is well-nigh forgotten, I cling tenaciously to every remembrance of our intimacy, because he was one of the very few friends I ever had to come up to my estimate of the Christian hero. . . . When I first met him in the Crimea he was a good-looking, curly-headed, young man of my own age—both of us being in our twenty-second year. His full, clear, and bright blue eyes seemed to court scrutiny, while at the same time they searched into your inner soul. An indifference to danger of all sorts, or, I should rather say, an apparent unconsciousness of it, bespoke a want of the sense which generally warns man of its presence. His single-mindedness of purpose startled me at times, for it made me feel how inferior I was to him in all the higher qualities of character; and how inferior were all my aims in life to his."

"The indifference to danger of all sorts," which had struck Lord Wolseley so forcibly in Gordon, was further illustrated by an incident related to me

in after years by the late General Nicholson, who was Captain to Gordon in the Crimea. "When the work of destroying the large graving-docks in Sebastopol was being carried out by our engineers after the south side had fallen to the allies, Gordon was employed in the mining operations. One day I went down into the shaft when all was ready for firing the charges. I found Gordon lying quietly asleep in the mine; he had been there some hours with 50,000 lbs. of powder under his bed."

I must pass rapidly over the next few years in the life of Gordon.

In 1860 China became the next step in that long ladder of service, which was finally to reach to such an extraordinary height. The story of these fourteen months' continuous and desperate fighting can ill bear to be condensed. Skimmed lightly over, it resembles some confused Titanic struggle—some half mythic saga, in which men move amid smoke and fume of fighting—capturing cities, making extraordinary marches, sudden stormings of fortified towns, but, when looked at quietly, the student of war will find in that campaign evidences of deep and subtile skill, profound calculation, resource, and indomitable resolution.

More than twenty years have passed since I studied the details of the campaign in the delta of the Yangtse River. I read it again a couple of weeks ago. Time has not lessened my opinion of the brilliant leadership shown by the commander during those fourteen months of incessant labour. The words of the parting address presented to him

by the merchants of all nationalities in Shanghai have a strange meaning to us when read to-day. They said truly that his service and career had been without a parallel in the history of the intercourse of foreign nations with China. "In a position of unequalled difficulty, and surrounded by complications of every possible nature, you have succeeded in offering to the eyes of the Chinese nation, no less by your loyal and always disinterested line of action than by your conspicuous gallantry and talent for organisation and command, the example of a foreign officer serving the Government of this country with honourable fidelity and undeviating self-respect." And then there followed the expression of a hope that China would profit by the example given to her "not only in the art of war, but in the more peaceful occupations of commerce and civilisation, and may see fit to level the barriers hitherto existing, and to identify itself more and more with that progressive course of action which, though springing from the West, must prove ultimately of equal benefit to the countries of the East."

A wish which has found realisation in our time, even if it be not so very evident to us to-day that this lesson in the art of western war, given by Gordon to the far East, has had in it all the benefits present and prospective, to "the peaceful occupations of trade and commerce" which these worthy merchants of Shanghai had so confidently predicted.

When Gordon was leading his army to the capture of the cities of the Yangste delta the forcing

of Japan into the comity of nations had but recently begun. No doubt the New Boy who had been selected for compulsory education in Dame Europa's school was anxiously watching this his first lesson; and few will deny that he has proved an apt pupil. Early in 1865 Gordon came back to England, and soon fell to the level of an unnoticed and unknown officer of Engineers at Gravesend. For six years he remained in this position, forced to witness and to help in an extravagant and useless waste of public money—the erection of a series of antiquated and already out-of-date forts on the right and left banks of the Thames at and near Gravesend.

But, though no man ever lived who could quicker discover the fact that military life in England must, from the nature of things, be largely what another great soldier whose statue is in Trafalgar Square had earlier defined it—"A slavery under Noodles"—still that discovery did not make him one whit less particular in the discharge of whatever his set piece of noodle-dom might be. For let us never forget in life that Noodle, particularly if he be in high position, may be a most useful schoolmaster. "First in the wood and last in the bog," says an old Celtic proverb. Our woods are largely gone; but we have a good many bogs—physical, moral and political—still left; and in walking behind "Noodle" you may not only have a chance of saving the poor fellow's life out of the bog-hole, when he inevitably falls into it, but you can also learn how to avoid it yourself!

The real relief which Gordon found during those six long years at Gravesend lay in another direction. Greater even than the waste of public funds which he witnessed was the waste of human life he saw around him. The muddy volume which the Thames at his door rolled to the sea was a clear and limpid stream compared with the surging tide of human want and misery which the vast city of that river's banks poured forth.

During these years Gordon lived, a scavanger of souls, by the side of that human torrent. He spent the off-hours of his life in picking up the human wreckage, piecing together their broken bits, and launching the reconstructed barque again upon the waters of life. I have met some good men in my day, and have read of a great many more in the pages of history and biography; but I can truly say that I never met a man who was so good and so great as this man. And I hold this opinion not because I think Gordon was a saint, but because heart and soul, body and brain, he was one of ourselves—one who, out of our ambitions, rivalries, temptations, and our rough-and-tumble of life, fashioned for himself a rule of conduct which any saint might imitate. What was that rule? Just that which was given by John the son of Zachary to the soldiers who, passing by the Jordan Valley, one day 1900 years ago, stopped and asked—"Master, what shall we do?" "And he said to them—Do violence to no man, neither calumniate any man, and *be content with your pay.*" Simple things these, you will say. Well, I do not agree

with you. I met some soldiers in life who did no violence to any man, and a few who said no ill words of any of their brethren; but I only met one soldier who was content with his pay—and that one was Gordon.

Indeed, he was more than content with his pay. He gave it away right and left. He denied himself all luxuries. He even gave his great gold Chinese medal to the poor. At Gravesend he had a table constructed with a deep drawer into which he could hastily put his plate and knife and fork if people came to see him during his meal hours; and in his sitting-room he had a map of the world whereon he kept marked with pins the probable places where the vessels in which his rescued gutter-snipes were at the time sailing.

Many persons will regard these six years of Gordon's life as the prime of his existence entirely wasted—six birthdays, from thirty-three to thirty-nine, passed in this lowly work at Gravesend: building ridiculous forts in official hours, and working all his spare time among gutter-snipes, hospitals, ragged schools, and old paralytic patients in the slums. But, perhaps, there was another aspect to it.

Gordon's active life of thirty-two years might be subdivided into seven distinct phases, six of them leading up to the final tragedy at Khartoum, and each one preparing him for that superb exit.

Sebastapol and Asia Minor—the science of attack and defence— disregard of physical danger—knowledge of the root-races of mankind the peoples

of Asia Minor—that was the first lesson, which lasted four years.

The second was China—that marvellous yellow race of men, older than any we know of now on earth, but possessing still a vital life as strong as it was when Abraham dwelt in Mesopotamia. That was the second chapter, in which he was to see humanity brayed in a mortar, literally reduced to pulp, in a land which a few years earlier had been such a scene of cultivated beauty and richness that to the Eastern mind it bore comparison with heaven. "If Paradise be in heaven," ran the old Chinese saying, "is not Loo-Chow" (the capital city of this province) "on earth?"

Then came Gravesend. And here there was laid bare, in his own old home, all that vast ocean of suffering which is ever shuffling its surges, and moaning its dismal waves, close beneath our civilisation—the mournful sea of the submerged tenth.

The fourth experience was to be gained in an entirely new sphere—the desert—the Soudan—the country of the blacks, as it is called. Who can picture or tell this thing? No one. You must live in it, and live in it for long, to get even a little bit of its meaning into your mind. "What went ye out into the desert to see?" A profound question, which few have ever answered save they who read the Bible. In our time there was only one man who tried to answer that question. He was the foremost poet and philosopher of his day—a Frenchman. "The prophet seeks solitude," that

man wrote "He unravels and untwists the threads of humanity, tied and rolled in a skein in his soul. He goes into the desert to think—of whom? Of the multitude. It is not to the wilderness that he speaks: it is to the cities." These words were written long before Gordon sought the desert; but they were prophetic of what he went to do in that vast wilderness. "It is not at the reed shaken by the wind that he looks," continues Victor Hugo. "It is at man. It is not against lions that he wars; it is against tyrants." These words describe literally the work of Charles Gordon in the desert. For six years he fought and he taught. He fought the tyrant slave-drivers and he taught himself. A strange place, you will think, to seek a school in. Is it? He carried a great library with him, all in one book—the Bible. You think I exaggerate? Well, hear the French philosopher again. "If poetry is not in the Bible," he asks, "where is it?" And again he says:—"As the sea is all salt, so is the Bible all poetry." But you may think that was only the idea of a poet. Let us hear what the greatest of American philosophers says on this point:—

> "Out from the heart of Nature rolled
> The burdens of the Bible old."

According to this great mind "the very heart of nature speaks in the Book." This, then, was the library which Gordon took with him into the desert, which is itself the heart of nature.

The desert is at once the world's womb and the world's tomb. Out of it all things came, and back

to it they will return. But note one thing—that the cities which grew out of the desert, and which devoted themselves exclusively to buying and selling, have passed back into the desert, and remain to us as the shadows of shadows: the cities that thought and taught are with us in spirit still. The desert may claim their dust and bones; but their souls remain with us. The Normans in our own land built deep and wide and strong—a cathedral, a castle, and a bridge—these were their three foundation-stones of dominion. Only the cathedrals remain in their pristine glory to-day. The Greeks built citadels, too; and in their shadow they built theatres: the citadels are gone; we have the thought of the Greek stage with us still.

What astonishes one most about the desert is that all the great masters of thought seem to have known it, although most of them were never within a thousand miles of a desert. Shakespeare knew the desert; Milton knew it; Shelley knew it; Byron knew it. They knew it, I suppose, because the fountain of thought was there. I say this because men have declared that Gordon was mad. We have heard of that species of madness before. It was once called the foolishness of the cross. To discover this madness in a great mind is soothing to some mortals. The comforters of Job, types never to disappear from the human race, thought the stricken seer of the Arabian Desert mad four thousand years ago; and four thousand years hence (if the world is still swinging its course) the diplomatic Bildads of the Departmental Zophars will still tap

their foreheads at somebody who says, or does, something which they cannot comprehend.

But we must pass on.

In 1871 Gordon left Gravesend for the Danube. His duties took him again to many places in the near East; and in Constantinople in '72 or '73 he happened to meet the Egyptian Minister, Nubar Pascha. Nubar was a great man—an Armenian by birth—a pupil of the school of Mahemet Ali, as Mahemet Ali had been a pupil of the school of Napoleon.

Nubar was quick to note his man. The East has a quicker intuitive knowledge of men than the West. There, in the East, they see eye to eye: in the West we are a little apt to see *eye-glass* to *eye*. There is a profound difference between the two methods. Anyhow, this meeting had a good deal of future history in it, for from it sprang the Soudan as we now know it.

In 1874 Gordon proceeded to Egypt as Governor of the Equatorial Provinces. He was then a major in his regiment, a colonel in the army, a mandarin of the first class in China, and he was soon to be a field marshal in Egypt.

I dare not enter in detail into the work that now began in that vast region of Africa. Africa defies detail. She has always defied it, as she has defied civilisation. Over against Greece, over against Rome, over against everything, for four thousand years that we know of, and possibly for double that time that we do not know of, she has butted against every attempt made to civilise her. Rightly

have they made the goat Africa's particular sign in the Zodiac. No matter how near to her may be the base from which the missionaries of civilisation attempt their mission, never a bit nearer can they get to her heart. Rome beats Carthage to the ground: seven hundred years later Carthage sacks Rome.

Once upon a time fate sent me to West Africa. It was my duty one day to watch the natives of the coast landing military stores from the fleet. We fed, or, as it is called, "rationed" these boatmen. Every time the surf-boat came to shore the cargo was landed through the surf, and the boat's crew refreshed themselves before proceeding seawards to the ships again. The ration supplied to them was salt pork in barrels. These they broached, and, taking the pork, frosted thickly with the saltest brine, from the barrel, they ate it raw. Now and again, when a pork chop, hidden in an extra fold of salt, fell to the lot of some man, he quietly struck it against the side of the surf-boat before swallowing the morsel. A terrific sun was beating down upon the bare heads of these boatmen, as thus they picnicked on the raw pork. When the feast was finished a big, square-shaped bottle of the most infamous Holland's gin was passed from mouth to mouth. Then, when the great bottle was empty, paddles were resumed, and the boat struck out again through the enormous surf.

People that can do this, and thrive on it, will put many nations under the ground. All the time, while this boat business was going on, we, the

white men on the coast, were going to earth very quickly. The black man was bearing the white man's burden to the grave, and making quite light work of it—as well, indeed, he might, as we were already mostly bones and skin. You will pardon this digression. I relate it as a small contribution to the great question of African civilisation.

From 1874 to 1880 Africa saw what I do not think it had ever before seen—a white man giving himself wholly and entirely to her service, unstintedly, unselfishly, unweariedly.

This Soudan is an immense region. Roughly speaking, twelve hundred miles from north to south, by twelve hundred miles from east to west—two-thirds of it desert, one-third marsh and jungle. Many nations have tried it in succession—Greece under Alexander, Persia under Cambyses, Rome under the Cæsars, the Arabs under Amru, the Franks under St. Louis, the Turks under Solyman, the French under Napoleon, the Egyptians under Mahemet Ali. Some of them never got beyond the coast, others left their bones farther inland; others realised that sand was a bad foundation upon which to build the house of Empire, and threw up the game and came away.

Of all that immense record this is certain—that no man went so far or so deep into the bowels of the Soudan as Charles Gordon. The game was up in 1879. The Khedive of Egypt—Ismail by name—had been a favourite client of the money-lending fraternity of Europe for several years. He had been writing his name, or, rather, the name of his

people, in all the ledgers of the Levites of finance for a dozen or more years—glad if he got ten millions when he signed, say, for sixteen.

Even with the Nile delta behind one, that system of ruling and borrowing must come to an end. It did this in 1879.

Gordon, never half-hearted in any cause he espoused, threw in his lot with Egypt, against the amalgamated spoilers of London, Paris, Berlin, and Vienna. "Where the carcase was," he wrote, "there the vultures were gathered together; and Egypt had long been the prey of all the vultures of Europe."

These words hold the whole history of Egypt during the last forty years. You think you perceive Governments, administrations, armies, navies, pro-consuls, generals, journalists, &c., &c. Well, of course, they are on the stage; but underneath that stage there are strings—and these great people above are dancing to them.

A bit of stage drapery is lifted in a recent book. Speaking of Gordon's return to London from the Soudan early in 1880, the writer says:—"All the world is agreed about his being a very wonderful man. He has ruled the Soudan for four years single-handed, and has repressed the slave trade completely. Now he comes home to England, and nothing is done for him. Neither Lord Beaconsfield nor any of the Ministers will so much as see him." And then there follows a delightful bit in the diary, which sums up so fully the man and his time that history should not miss

it. "He (Gordon) made a mistake at starting in his relations with him. . . . Passing through Paris on his way home, he called on Lord Lyons at the Embassy, and begged him to see to the appointment of a European successor to himself in the Soudan; and in the course of conversation held out a threat that if the English Government would not do this he would go to the French Government. Whereupon a correspondence ensued with Lord Lyons, in which Gordon wrote a last very impertinent letter, ending with these words:—'I have one comfort in thinking that in ten or fifteen years' time it will matter little to either of us. A black box, six feet six by three feet wide, will then hold all that is left of Ambassador or Cabinet Minister or of your humble and obedient servant.'

"This has stamped him in official eyes as a madman!"

Here we have it all—the entire sincerity and straightforward speech of this man, ruler, despot, conqueror, soldier, administrator, coming back after six years of such toil and service as not one man in twenty millions has ever to face; and, forsooth, because his heart is set upon saving the enormous region he has just left in peace from falling again into anarchy, confusion, and slave strife, he is mad when he reminds his Excellency the Ambassador that death is to be their common lot, and that in the presence of that black box it really does not much matter whether they listen to him or snub him.

"To those who feel the bottom of their pockets,

the inexhaustible must seem insane," says a French writer. What colossal hypocrisy and make-believe it all is!

To tell this diplomatic Polonius in Paris the simplest form of truth is enough to put the greatest Englishman of his time out of court for ever!

But I suppose in this complex world of our day hypocrisy and make-believe must remain among the most cherished institutions of Government and society. To put them aside would be like taking off one's clothes in the public streets; the policeman would have to be called in! In Gordon's case it was the keeper they thought of sending for. From this time forward until 1884, the idea was seduously spread that Gordon was mad. "Our officials always detested him," says the same writer. No doubt they did. He believed in an over-ruling Providence, he was careless about money, he read the Bible; but above all these signs of madness he was great, and still more fatal—he was familiar. Really these Foreign Office officials should have read their French lesson-books better. They might have found it written by a high authority that "Greatness has two sides, majesty and familiarity." And again, that "A man becomes extraordinary in the eyes of other men when his measurement is different from their's." And again, that "*the most precise minds may be visionary.*" But even had they known of these things, it is probable they would still have said "mad"—beyond Bedlam. That allusion to the black box was not to be condoned or explained. An ambassador in a

black box! Surely nothing will excuse that? No, nothing.

We will give it up, and go on.

The Beaconsfield Ministry, none of whose members would see Gordon after his return from these six years-miracle-working in the Soudan, went out of office a month or two later. Apparently the new ministers had not the same black book in which to enter the name of the black box offender. In May, 1880, Gordon became private secretary to the newly-appointed Governor-General of India. The acceptation of the offer by Gordon was a mistake. No man who had wielded even a lesser degree of power than Gordon had wielded, and no man who held opinions such as his, could possibly hope to go into the trammels of Indian official life.

Gordon proceeded to Bombay with the new Governor-General, and resigned his appointment immediately upon landing. Then he went to China, where the council of the Empire wanted his advice. War with Russia was in the air; and even China had her Jingoes. But peace was kept between the two nations largely through Gordon's outspoken opinion given direct to the Isungli-Yamen.

Meanwhile some of the various bodies of that system of congested clerkship, which the public groups generically under the name of "the authorities," were at work upon this new departure in the far East which Gordon had made. Telegrams were passing to and fro between London and Pekin, and London and Bombay. One can

easily picture the alarm of the people upon whom the burthen of Empire descends every week-day morning, between the hours of eleven and twelve, within their various arm-chairs of office. The many "Where is he's?" that must have been asked when the news came to the dovecotes of administration that the eagle was abroad. Nor can we wonder at the flutterings: events had moved rapidly.

On the 3rd June Gordon had resigned office in Bombay. On the 5th he received the telegram from Sir Robert Hart, inviting him to go at once to China. The message was urgent. "I am directed to invite you here—Pekin. Please come and see for yourself. This opportunity of doing useful work on a large scale ought not to be lost. Work, position, conditions can all be arranged here to your satisfaction. Do take six months' leave and come."

This pressing invitation to go to the assistance of the land to which he had given almost his first services, was sent in ignorance of Gordon's position at the moment. It was even supposed in China that he was still in England, and the message was addressed to London.

On the 8th June Gordon accepted the invitation to China, telegraphing that he would leave for Shanghai by the first opportunity, and that he was entirely indifferent to conditions. On the same day he telegraphed the War Office in London asking for six months' leave of absence, and adding:—"Never mind pay; am invited to China; will not

involve Government." Answer came at once:—"Must state specific purpose for, and position in which, you go to China." Next day Gordon replied: "Am ignorant; will write from China before expiration of leave." On 11th War Office answered:—"Reasons insufficient; your going to China not approved." On 12th Gordon replied, resigning his commission:—"My counsel, if asked, would be for peace, not war," he added.

He did not wait for a reply to this message, but started the same day for China. At Galle a further message from the War Office reached him:—"Leave granted on your engaging to take no military service in China." He replied:—"I will take no military service in China: I would never embarrass the British Government."

These messages show plainly two opposing lines of thought. Perfect openness of mind and truthfulness on one side; suspicion of motive on the other—the latter probably dating from the *black box* episode. They are given here because I see in them the continuation of a hostile mind on the part of the official ruling towards Gordon, which four years later was to prove fatal to him in Khartoum. Perhaps the keenest thought he ever suffered was this suspicion. When he was returning from China three months later, he telegraphed:—"You might have trusted me."

There is one incident connected with this last visit to China which is not known. When Gordon reached China in July he found a very serious state

of affairs existing there. The strife between the war party and the advocates of peace had reached an acute stage. Gordon's old companion in arms—Li Hung Chang—was at the head of the peace party. His assassination was feared at the hands of his enemies—the foreign ministers at Tientsin were in great anxiety. It was proposed that Li should take strong measures against the men in power in Pekin. It was even suggested to Gordon that he should head the movement, march on Pekin, and depose the Emperor.

On August 6th Gordon wrote:—"The only thing that keeps me in China is Li Hung Chang's safety: if he were safe I would not care; but some people are egging him on to rebel—some to this, and some to that—and all appears in a helpless drift. There are parties in Pekin who would drive the Chinese into war for *their own ends*." He might have added that there were also parties who urged him—Gordon—to march on Pekin, and declare himself Emperor.

This last proposition was really at the root of the reason which caused him to leave China in August. He had then secured peace, and the ascendancy of Li Hung Chang in the Councils of the Empire. For himself he did not care; but it is very interesting to note that he describes himself while at Pekin as saying to one foreign minister as to the state of affairs existing:—"What does it matter? Neither you nor I will, in all probability, live more than ten or twelve years; and what does it signify if we

shorten that?" Here we have a repetition of the black box incident, carried from Paris to Pekin before the days of motor travel.

Gordon got back to England in October, 1880. He was deep in departmental black books; but he did not care. What did rankle in his mind was the suspicion of his motives. "I cannot stand it. I went to China," he added, "fully convinced that, whether I wished it or not, China would not have employed me. I felt I could persuade them *not* to make war."

But we must hurry towards the final phase.

Forces, of whose existence Gordon knew little, were now beginning to show themselves in many directions. There were storm centres in Ireland, in South Africa, and in Egypt. We will only speak of the last-named one. It is not easy to determine the precise date at which an occupation of Egypt by English troops came to be considered as a likely contingency; but it is certain that it took form earlier than is usually believed to be the case. As early as the end of 1875 it had certainly entered the phase of preparatory examination of locality, which usually marks such intentions or acquisitions.

The Russo-Turkish war delayed further developments; but the increasing financial embarrassments of the Khedive in 1879 and 1880 made easier the road to action; and in 1882 the movement in Egypt, known as the National movement, under the leadership of Arabi Pascha, opened the door to intervention.

Gordon had gone to Mauritius in May, 1881, and after nearly a year spent in that distant station he

had, on attaining the rank of Major-General, proceeded to the Cape of Good Hope in April, 1882. He was wont during his stay in Mauritius to name the island his "*Patmos*." The name suggests that the idea of exile was not altogether absent from his mind at this time.

The occupation of Egypt in 1882 found Gordon in South Africa, endeavouring to arrange matters between the Cape Government and their Basuto subjects. This employment soon came to an end, and in November, 1882, he was again in England.

There ensued now a strange interval in this strange life. Gordon was now fifty years of age. For thirty years he had lived a life of action beyond that of any man of his race and time. One can state the limits in some sketchy way—put down the sailings, the returnings, and the countries; but the ten thousand miles of camel riding, the boat work, the forest work, the mule work, the fierce sun of the Soudan, the roar of the Nile in its cataracts, the interminable distances of the desert, the vast horizons, —*these* cannot be brought back. Still less can be recalled the endless writings, the interviews, the abortive efforts. One little fragment comes back to me out of that wilderness of work, and it seems to hold the key-note of it all, the success and the failure, the wonderful influence exercised over men high and low out of his own country, and the tragedy in which it all ended.

Here it is as related in his brother's (Sir Henry Gordon) work :—

"When the King of Abyssinia said to him

(Gordon): 'I am speaking to an Englishman and a Christian,' Gordon promptly interrupted him, saying: 'Excuse me, you are addressing an *Egyptian* and a *Mussulman*.' So, wherever he went in the world it was to serve the interests of the people where he was—a principle which he further made clear when he wrote:—'A foreigner entering the service of an Oriental power . . . should for the time entirely abandon his relations with his native land. . . . He should put himself in the position of a native when he was to advise the Sultan or Khedive on any question which his own native, or any foreign, Government may want settled; and his advice should be sealed by (1) what is universally right throughout the world, and (2) by what is best for the Oriental State he serves.'"

In these rules of conduct I think we get the secret of Gordon's life and death. And now Khartoum.

Up to almost the moment of his mission to the Soudan, in January, 1884, Gordon was still in the shadow of the eclipse into which his opposition to the designs of the Egyptian bondholders in 1879 had first cast him.

Shortly after his return from South Africa, in November, 1882, he had gone to Palestine, and taken up his residence in Jerusalem. There, and in its vicinity for nearly a year, he gave himself wholly to a life of study and reflection upon the most profound subjects of human life on earth. To follow the thread of his thoughts during that year in the Holy Land would require a volume to itself. I can

only say here that I have always regarded that year spent in Palestine by Gordon as a time of preparation for the final trial which was now so close at hand. Returning from Palestine in December, Gordon reached Brussels on New Year's Day, 1884. He had already arranged with the King of the Belgians to proceed to the Congo to take up the administration of the newly-formed State; but he was met on arrival at Brussels with a fresh refusal on the part of his own Government. The Foreign Office would not sanction his employment by the King of the Belgians. Thus he was neither to be employed by his own Government, nor allowed to take service under a foreign Government, and meanwhile he was in absolute want of money!

The only course now possible was to resign his commission and proceed to the Congo as a private individual. The letter of resignation was accordingly written on January 7th. Next day, the 8th, an important event occurred. Mr. Stead, then representing the *Pall Mall Gazette*, had an interview with Gordon in Southampton, where he was making his final preparations for immediate departure to the Congo. Events in the Soudan had reached a most critical stage. The entire region, left in complete peace and security by Gordon only four years earlier, had become the theatre of a vast revolt. In the previous November an army commanded by an English general, and officered largely by Englishmen, had been surrounded and annihilated by the soldiers of Mahomet Achmet, the new Mahdi. Ten

thousand men, twenty guns, six thousand horses and camels, had gone down before the wild rush of the Arab spearmen.

Professor Huxley has somewhere said that government by average opinion is merely a circuitous method of going to the devil. In this case the destination was reached by the short cut.

In old days in Egypt, when the Nile flood in the delta broke the bank which retained it, it was the habit of the functionary who was nearest to the scene of disaster to hurry up to the neighbouring village, seize a couple of score of the villagers, and, with the aid of the police, force them bodily into the gap to stay the rushing waters in their destructive course. Something of a similar nature was soon to be attempted; but it was to be tried as "a one man job." Gordon was thought of as a means of checking this rush of Soudanese spearmen. Would he go into the gap? Of course he would. The proposition was put to him formally at noon on the 18th January, and at 8 p.m. the same evening he was *en route* for Khartoum.

History has written the rest of the story in characters so large that I need not repeat it to you.

I said in the beginning of this paper that more than twenty years had elapsed since I wrote a short biography of Charles Gordon. At that time I had not long returned from taking a part in the Nile Expedition, the advanced portion of which had reached within sight of Khartoum—just two days too late. I wrote the book under the pressure of many thoughts: the highest admiration of the man,

deep disappointment at the failure to save him, and an absolute belief that that failure could easily have been avoided. The years that have since passed have only deepened and confirmed these feelings and beliefs. I believe that Gordon was the best and greatest Englishman of his day. Time may have lessened the sorrow of our failure; but the belief that, humanly speaking, it was quite possible to have saved him is stronger now than it ever was. Not once, nor twice, nor thrice, was the chance lost, but many more times.

Accepting the verdict of fate, however, there still remains the memory of the man himself; and of that I would say a few words. It was when I came to study the life of Gordon through such of his writings as have been given to the public that the mental figure of the man rose to full proportions and proper symmetry. I found in this man of marvellous deeds a depth of poetry and a width of thought beyond anything that the world imagines possible among its men of action. Here was a combination of human excellencies and spiritual genius which is rarer now than in bygone times among men. It seemed as if there had come together in him the intensity of direction and effort, common to our insular race and to the West, and that vast spirit of reflective thought of which the East has been the home. Men said of him that he only read the Bible. I know not if it was true; but this I know, that if the object in reading be the training of the human mind to the measurement of man in the world, and to the best apportionment of

his life therein, then the Bible outweighs in its school-value all other books combined. For, remember that literature, as the world reads it, is not the world's confession: it is rather the record of the world's pride. The Bible is the world's true confession. It is the anatomy of the collective human body tied up on the cross of life.

"Poetry," says a great poet, "has two ears: one listens to life, the other to death." That is the Bible.

Since Gordon's death the scoffer and detractor have not been wanting. For a time the blaze of heroism in which his life went out stilled the voices of those to whom a great life is a reproach. But after a time the dumbed ones spoke—Gordon drank. Gordon was mad.

Well, what says the greatest of the world's philosophers? "No excellent soul is exempt from a mixture of madness." The man who said this had taught Alexander the Great. Wolfe was mad at Quebec, and of course Napoleon was mad many times; yet you remember what Carlyle wrote of him:—"He might have been among the finest writers of his age, if he had not chosen to be the first conqueror of any age."

In tracing out the life of Charles Gordon I have known one regret. It was that he had not lived and died twenty years earlier, and thus had Thomas Carlyle to write his life-history.

Gordon was no man's copy: he was himself. He left no children, and in the sense of his greatness he had no ancestors—unless, indeed, he might

have said, as the French Marshal said in the picture gallery in Berlin to the court flunkey who was showing him the portraits of several distinguished ancestors of the reigning family:—"*I am an ancestor.*"

After the end at Khartoum men wrote of Gordon many fine things. Among other things it was repeated of him that while he lived "one of Plutarch's men talked with us face to face." They did not add that nobody had listened to what he said.

Greater, indeed, was he than were most of the men about whom Plutarch wrote; for Charles Gordon had an entire sincerity of heart and soul which they knew not of. No matter what the task before him, this, the most successful man of action of our day, knew but one rule: *that right could never be wrong*. That was the key-note of his life-work.

Intensely Christian himself, he was tolerant in the extreme towards others. Writing, in 1881, of a Mahometan officer who had been his secretary in the Soudan, he said: "He was my only companion for three years, my adviser, and my counsellor. He dared to oppose and to reason with me, and I and all the Soudan respected him. He was very brave, and always dignified. He had large views of government, and knew his country well. He will ever be one of those who have *taught me the great lesson that in all nations and in all climes there are those who are perfect gentlemen*, and who, though they may not be called Christians, are so in spirit

and in truth. They may not see how Christ is their Saviour; but they die with a sense that all their efforts are useless, and with the conviction that unless God provides some way of satisfying His justice they have no hope."

So you may see that this man was greater than Plutarch's men—he was Christ's man.

"They were a great People, Sir."

A CONTRIBUTION TO SOME VEXED QUESTIONS IN IRELAND.

1881.

Any person leaving Euston Station at 8 25 p.m., and travelling by Irish Express Service, *via* Holyhead, Kingstown, and Dublin, may find himself at twelve noon on the following day at a railway junction in the centre of the South of Ireland, some 430 miles from London. Changing trains at this junction, he will reach Limerick an hour later, where a second and final change will place him in a carriage marked "Ennis."

After a certain lapse of time, his new train, moving out from Limerick station, will run slowly through some rich low-lying meadows—will run slower still across a bridge spanning a large full-fed river flowing towards the West, and finally will achieve the slowest measure of railroad progression as it puffs and blows up the steep grades that lead from "Shannon's Shore" to the high level of the Cratloe Hills in Clare.

And now, as stations come and go along the line of railway, the traveller, apart from a keen enjoyment of bits of rare landscape beauty intermixed with bare brown stretches of bog and treeless waste, will become conscious of a new sensation. He will

find himself in a world where time has no value, where punctuality is a precept recognised only in its incessant infraction, and where "rail-roading" —as it is termed in America—is a business completely divested of those characteristics of bustle, speed, energy, and animated human effort which are usually associated with its practice throughout the world. We will take one station on the line as a sample of the routine of traffic more or less observable at all.

With many sudden jerks, and harsh sounds of iron in contact with iron, the train comes to a stop—a lazy-looking porter walks along the platform shouting the name of the station in a deep, rich *patois*—the guard and the station-master greet each other after the manner of friends who have not met for years, and may not meet again in life. Apparently overcome by emotion, they retire into the recesses of the station-house. A man comes along with a grease-box for the wheels; he is about to proceed with his avocation when, recognising a friend in the middle of a third-class compartment, he lays down his box, suspends all lubricating effort, and devotes himself to a prolonged shaking of hands through the carriage-windows, his "How are ye, Mickey?" being borne in tones of genuine welcome along the train. Nobody appears to be getting in or out, nor does there seem to be any reason whatever—mail, baggage, or otherwise—why the train should have stopped, unless it was for the benefit of the two members of the Royal Irish Constabulary, the single car-driver, and the

half-dozen idlers of both sexes, who stand on the platform, or the other half-dozen less privileged individuals who are looking over the station wall, blankly staring at the proceedings. The car-driver is near our carriage-window, and we engage him in conversation.

"They stop a long time here," we remark.

"They do, yer honour—but the hill was agin her from Limerick up, and she do get hot over it," he replied.

"Is it all like this?" we ask.

"It's mostly the same up to Ardsollus," he answers, "but from Ardsollus down she gives great value entirely. But shure, it's better for her," he goes on, "to take her coorse aisy; last year she was on her time at Cratloe crossing—the gate was shut agin her—the porter's wife ran to open it, and got killed."

Suddenly the station bell interrupts our conversation, the engine whistles, and we move off from the platform. Now ensues much confusion in the interior of the station. The guard rushes out followed by the station-master; the first-named official masters the position at once—a shout, and an impatient wave of the hand brings the train back again to the platform—this done, the guard turns fiercely upon some idle urchins who are standing in suspicious proximity to the station bell.

"Which of yez," he demands, "was it stharted her?"

There is no reply.

"Ave I caught the one that gave her the bell,

I'd ——." Here words failed to express the vengeance he would wreak upon the delinquent ringer. The boys separate and run, the guard gives the final signal of departure, and we move slowly off at last, one hour and twenty minutes behind time.

Despite the "value" given from Ardsollus down—a remunerative proceeding solely due to a steep down grade which "she" was utterly powerless to control—we are fully an hour late at Ennis station. To the people in the train, or to those out of it, the hour lost matters little, but with thirty long miles before us, ere the halting-place for the night is reached, the delay makes a serious difference.

There is a bright side, however, to the picture. If the rail-roading has been slow and bad, the car-driving is destined to be rapid and excellent. Our few traps are neatly and expeditiously packed "on the well," the driver takes his reins and the off-seat, touches the little brown mare with the whip, and we are soon outside Ennis, holding a steady pace of seven miles in the hour into the West. There are still four hours of good daylight before us, and we are only twenty hours out from London.

Only twenty hours of time, yet an age of scene and surrounding. It is midsummer—the blue-grey limestone road stretches away over hill and dale—dustless, grass-bordered, and silent. On the ditches, over the fields, and up the rounded hills the grass is green as only Irish grass can be—soft-green in the shadows, golden-green where the

sun, now sinking slowly towards the west, touches it with slanting beam—many meadows are deep in yellow flagger lilies, the corn-crake is loud amid the tufts of meadowsweet, and the outline of the hills lies in wonderful clearness against the sky; there are dark patches of bog and lighter bits of heather scattered here and there, with acres of potatoes in blossom and fields of

"drooping oats
Through which the poppies show their scarlet coats."

Now and again, on either side of the road, a solitary shattered tower stands out upon a bare hillside, or a rounded "rath," fringed with thorn bushes, is seen, and often the ivied gable of a roofless church rises near the roadside—the ruined reminders of forgotten times.

After two hours' driving we stop at the door of a roadside public-house, on the white-washed wall of which a board informs the traveller that Fanny O'Dea is licensed to dispense spirits and entertainment for man and beast. The driver gives the mare "a white drink," takes a darker one himself, and then we go on again towards the west—the daylight of the long June evening still glorious over the land.

The driver has now become loquacious. He is loud in praise of the beauty of Mrs. O'Dea. He tells us that when he first knew her she "had a waist like the shaft of his car." He tells us, too, that he remembers the bad times, but that personally "he didn't get much of the famine." He informs us that the country through which we are

passing, and the castles which we see rising up, grey ruined towers on the green slopes, "all belonged once to the MacMahons, that they held the land, far and near, from six miles on this side of Ennis to the rocks at Loop Head; that they were a great people, but that they are all gone from the land now."

"Where did they go to?" we ask.

"Devil a one knows, yer honour. It's likely they hanged some, and transported more, and maybe them that was neither hanged nor transported drank themselves out—anyways they're gone out of it this many a day."

"And who's in their place now?" we inquire.

"There's many a one," he replies; "there's S——, and S——, and S——, and a lot more."

The road now begins to ascend a long incline; we alight to walk the hill. Before we are half way to the top the driver has forgotten the MacMahons, and is enlightening us as to how it was he had never got married, "though there was a girl of the Malony's" he says, "about two miles off the road on the left, that was even then breaking her heart for him."

At last we are on the top of the hill. Below—at the further side—the land spreads out in many a mile of shore, ridge, and valley into the golden haze of sunset. The estuary of the Shannon opens westward into the Atlantic; from shore to shore many miles of water are gleaming in the evening light. A large green island lies in the estuary, and from its centre a lofty round tower rises above many

ruins dark in the sunlight: back from the shore rolling ridges spread westward, green, wild, and treeless. These ridges, this long line of shore far as eye can reach in front, was all MacMahon territory; behind us, farther than we can look back, was MacMahon's land too.

So much for the scene, as it presented itself to us on this summer's evening. Let us see if we can add something to the driver's "They were a great people, but they're all gone, root and branch, from the land now, sir."

To do so we must go back a long way. Among the many Celtic names in the early history of Ireland from which the English reader turns in perplexed indifference, there is one which seems to have caught in more lasting cadence the modern memory. It is that of Brian Boru—Brian of the Tribute.

This favourite hero of Celtic bard and historian fell fighting, as everybody knows, or ought to know, on the field of Clontarf; or rather he was slain towards the end of the battle by some fugitive Danes, who found him praying in his tent—like Moses—for the success of his people. He was at this time eighty-eight years of age.

Many of his kith and kin perished in the same battle. His eldest son, Murrough, we are told, used his battle-axe with great effect upon the Danes, until his right hand and arm became so swollen that his blows were unable to deal death through the armour of his enemies. In this condition he was set upon by the Danish chief, Arnulf.

Seizing his enemy with his left hand, Morrough first shook him out of his armour, and then killed him with his axe; but it is said that the Dane, in his last moment, snatched his opponent's knife from his belt, and plunged it into his side. Tordelback, or Turlough, son of Murrough, and grandson of Brian, also died hard that day. He was only a boy of sixteen, but, despite his youth, the "Annals of Clonmacnoise" tell us that his body was found after the battle floating in the tideway of the Tolka river, with both his hands twisted in the hair of a Dane whom he had followed into the sea.

Fortunately for the future of the MacMahons, some of Brian's children survived this famous day at Clontarf. Tordelback the second—son of another son—left a child, Murrough, who afterwards became King of Ireland in 1100. He left a son, Mahon O'Brian, the first MacMahon of Corca Basca. That the family came of a good fighting stock we think the above details will sufficiently attest. By what process this Mahon O'Brian became chief of Corca Basca—namely, of all the shore-line, hill-side, river, vale, and meadow we have looked at from the height of land on the summer evening lately described—there is now no record; but title to possession could not have proved a matter of grave difficulty to the kin of Murrough, the armour-shaker, or Tordelback, the hair-twister.

We may pass over the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in a few words. Corca Basca lay a long way off. Unless its chieftains made themselves conspicuous by seeking their enemies, their enemies

were not likely to go looking for them. That the MacMahons, and their cousins, the O'Brians, did issue forth across the Shannon is, indeed, frequently on record. We hear of them in many a fight against the early Norman settlers, and once as wreaking a "great fury" upon a body of Ostmen or Danes in the service of the Normans in 1170.

But all through their wars, whether against Dane, Norman, or rival Celtic chieftain, they appear to have shown considerable knowledge of that second string to the bow of force—diplomacy. The lords of Thomond were never adverse to treating with their foes. Even the great Brian of Clontarf, destroyer of Danes though he was, could give his daughter in marriage to a Danish prince, and take to wife the widow of a Danish king—indeed, the family seemed fond of foreign alliances. Harold, the last king of the Saxons, was brother-in-law to O'Brian of Thomond.

When King Richard the Second made his first attempt to conciliate the Irish chiefs after two hundred years of fruitless fighting, O'Brian of Thomond was one of the four "Kings of Ireland" who were selected for the experiment of having knighthood conferred upon them. The reply of the chiefs was characteristic. "At seven years of age," they said, "our sons receive knighthood: we assemble in an open space, the boys, mounted on horseback, run tilts against shields hung in the centre of the plain; the boy who breaks the largest number of shafts is first in the list of knights." It was explained that in Norman chivalry knighthood

was an honour so high that prince and king might aspire to it. Finally, the four chiefs were induced to accept the distinction, but notwithstanding all the pomp and display lavished by the king upon the ceremony of the installation, the Celtic chiefs received their honours with feelings not altogether unlike those with which some Maharajah in India, who traced unbroken descent from Timour, or Mahmoud of Ghizni, might regard the insignia of an order which he held in companionship with Sir Bumble, the Mayor of Modbury. For nearly two hundred years following this event we hear little of the O'Brians or their cousins, the MacMahons. Corca Basca lay beyond Thomond. Thomond was itself a long way from every place—shut in between the great ocean, a large river, a lake, and trackless swamps.

Early in the fifteenth century, however, a great change was begun in Thomond, as it was in many another portion of Ireland. It was the substitution of property for clanship, landlord for chief, tenant for people—a change the ultimate effect of which we have not yet arrived at. The archives of the family tell us that in the middle of the fifteenth century the MacMahon of that day, Donough-na-Glanna (the six-fingered one), divided his territory among his three sons, the third and youngest receiving as his share about 12,000 acres of the country lying around the spot where to-day the white-washed hostelry of Mrs. Fanny O'Dea promises rest and refreshment to thirsty bipeds or quadrupeds travelling the Ennis highway.

It is our intention to follow the fortunes of this younger branch, as it has fallen out that a moiety of the 12,000 acres thus bestowed by the six-fingered chieftain upon his third son has survived the wars and attainders of Irish history, in the possession of the MacMahons, or their representatives, and this moiety, lying, as it were, islanded amid an ocean of confiscation, may prove a useful standpoint from which to gain some insight into the question of land possession in Ireland, shorn of those complications which successive forfeitures have added to it.

Between applying themselves to the management of their internal affairs at home, and giving a general support to the English interest, the house of Thomond, and that of MacMahon, prospered during the reigns of the Tudor monarchs which proved so disastrous to many other noble names in Ireland. Through the long strife of twenty years in which Elizabeth's reign turned fertile Munster into a wilderness, the lands of Thomond, though separated only by a river from Desmond, remained untouched—Malbie, Perrot, Carew, St. Leger, Grey, and a score of lesser though not less hungry adventurers hovered around the borders of Thomond, wasting the "Kingdom" of the last Earl of Desmond; but when the storm that wrecked that proud house and laid low the O'Neill had passed, Clare, from Lough Derg to Loop Head, was still O'Brien and MacMahon. Even Malbie, who could ever find but scanty measure of good word to bestow upon Irish chief or people, thinks

it possible to write to Leicester commending "the good disposition of the young Earl of Thomond, who is Leinster's true follower and faithful friend."

The service given to the Tudors was continued to the Stuarts.

In the rebellion of 1641, Lord Inchiquin became the chief support of English power in Ireland. He served Charles, he served the Parliament, and, again, he served the king; and, again, when Ireland emerged from twenty years of struggle, Clare was still O'Brian and MacMahon.

The end of this long dominion was, however, approaching.

When James II. made his last stand, Thomond and Inchiquin were with him to a man. With the fall of his cause in Ireland, O'Brian and MacMahon fell too. Indeed, these two names may be said to have formed the point or apex of that great "flight of the wild geese" from Ireland which began at the close of the seventeenth century. How well they carried themselves on the wide stage of European history is now an old story. Wherever life was to be lost or honour won over all the great battle-field that lay between "Dunkirk and Belgrade" there the exile from Clare was to be found.

For fully one hundred years following the capitulation of Limerick, the deep bays and secluded harbours of the south and west coasts of Ireland saw strange vessels standing in at nightfall from the open sea; at daybreak next morning a sail

would be visible on the horizon's rim, fast fading into space; and up in the treeless hills of Corca Basca, or on the lonely shores of Moyarta, there would be weeping eyes and breaking hearts for the boy who had gone to take his place in the ranks of Clare's Dragoons or Inchiquin's Foot, and to lay his nameless dust by Danube's shore, or Rhenish hill-side, in the great game of European history.

Poor Corca Basca! During all this eighteenth century it lay a dreary blank upon the world's face. Out beyond the great ocean—which day and night ever sobbed against Moyarta's rocks—the names of O'Brien and MacMahon were high on the rolls of honour in the service of France, Spain, or the Empire; but the old home knew them only in whispers. At times the echo of a great fight came homeward over the sea, and then there would be joy in some old castle, or some lowly cabin, at the news that Donough had done well at Ramilies; or Turlough had carried himself bravely at Cremona; or Murrough had met a soldier's death at Marsiglia. Joy would there be, too, but of a different kind, among the new lords of the land, when tidings came of the death of some gentleman of the old stock who had followed fallen fortunes over the sea. Perchance, it would be the name of a big one among the exiles who had gone down, some lord whose shadow, while he lived, ever seemed to fall across his rifled acres, and to forbid the new proprietor to rest in peace upon them. But the fall of the exile in foreign parts did not always bring the coveted rest to the new man in the old acres. The

stock was as prolific of birth as it was generous to death, and there were MacMahon cadets and O'Brien claimants still lingering around the old scenes—sometimes as tenants-at-will, upon lands which their fathers had possessed in fee; sometimes as broken gentlemen fast sinking into disrepute.

A dark century, truly, for Ireland was this eighteenth. The old leaders gone, the men whose brain-power could and must have led the ranks beneath them into the paths of progress banished from the land; giving leaders of armies to half the States of Europe; their places at home taken by men who possessed not one attribute that could command from the people the obedience given to birth or yielded to distinction.

Even in the reign of Elizabeth, the new element introduced had been chiefly of gentle blood, and the link between chief and people, broken by confiscation, had become again recoverable; but Cromwell's conquest, and the forfeitures that followed the fall of the Stuarts, had introduced a new race of proprietors. It was no longer the cadet of some noble house from England or Scotland, it was the rough trooper from the Lincoln fen, or the Fifth-monarchy man from Wapping or Bristol. In Elizabeth's reign, it is true, a castle and a thousand acres could be given for a breakfast, but the recipient was a Walter Raleigh. A Lord Deputy's clerk could get a lordly gift from Desmond's rifled acres; but the clerk was Edmund Spencer. Fifty years later, the price given for

lands or castles had not sensibly increased; but the deed of the new ownership was likely to be made to a Bradshaw or an Axtel.

If a man attempted to carry off the Crown jewels from the Tower, if he had signed the sentence of death against King Charles in Westminster, or had struck his death-blow on the scaffold at Whitehall, there was sure to be some castle in Clare, some manor in Meath, some church-land in Cork, to give him ready refuge and sure reward, and the extremes of escape from punishment in one country, and the reward for crime in the other, seemed to meet in the mutual detriment of Tyburn and Tipperary, which were alike defrauded of their legitimate rights.

But to return to the MacMahons.

The beginning of the eighteenth century found but a broken remnant of chiefs or gentlemen in the old lands of Moyarta and Clonderalaw—they had totally disappeared from the wild West Coast; further to the east one Donough held precarious tenure at Clenagh. In what way he managed to survive the surrender of Limerick is not apparent, but so long as Queen Anne lived he could not have lacked powerful friends in high quarters. His wife had been a Barnewall—a name often repeated in the Rolls of Attainder, but her grandmother was related to Sarah Duchess of Marlborough, and no one who could call the great Sarah cousin was likely to suffer much at the hands of any man-made law.

After the death of Queen Anne things changed;

Donough had too many friends and relations "over the water" to bide long in quiet over his land. His wife's three brothers were fighting in Spain, Turkey, and the Low Countries, his own kith and kin were marching and countermarching under the orders of Villars, Vendôme, or Villaroy. It was all too much for Donough. He got a couple of thousand pounds on a last mortgage of the estate, made Clenagh over in trust to a cousin, one Sir Donough O'Brien, and, taking ship at the Shannon mouth with his eldest boy, sailed away, for ever, from the old home.

Sir Donough O'Brien, the trustee, had become empowered to hold property in Ireland by a process not unusual in those days. His mother, Monie Rua MacMahon, a few years earlier had conformed to the Protestant religion. She "renounced the errors of the Roman Church and embraced those of the Established religion" (as an Irish newspaper, a few years later, announced a similar change on the part of a nobleman) with a remarkable expression of opinion which deserves record. "Better one old woman be damned," she said, "than O'Brien and MacMahon be beggars." Verily, the blood of Boru had not degenerated—water could not unclasp the youthful Tordelback's grasp from the hair of his enemy. Seven hundred years later fire was powerless to drag from the old dame, Monie, the acres of Corca Basca!

When Donough MacMahon sailed away from the Shannon, with the world all before him, he could have been no stranger wheresoever he turned. It is

not too much to say that during the first half of this eighteenth century he would have found himself at home in any army in Europe. There were MacMahons and O'Briens lying asleep under the turf at Ramilies, Blenheim, and Almanza; there were Barnewalls and Hamiltons (wife's people) quiet enough at Marsiglia, Malplaquet, and Sauverne; but there were plenty of others still left to take their places in the great game.

When Berwick falls at Phillipsburg, a few years later, one kinsman standing by his chief will be wounded by the same cannon-shot, as another kinsman, a generation earlier, had stood beside Turenne at the final moment at Sasbach. Five others are still to fall at Fontenoy; at Lauffield three more are to go down, and there is a Barnewall (wife's brother) to fall fighting the Turks, at Critzka, in Hamilton's (wife's uncle) regiment of Imperial Cuirassiers.

Amid all these, and many more, kinsmen and relations, Donough had a wide field of war to choose from. He selected the service of the Empire, and in the year 1753, like the son of the great Napoleon, "he died an Austrian colonel." Terence, the eldest son, was also an officer in the Imperial service; he never revisited the land of his birth; there was plenty of work for him in Silesia, Poland and Bohemia, and the hills of Corca Basca and the castle of Clenagh must have remained to him only as a vague memory of boyhood. At last there came back from over the sea one Stanislaus Maximilian James MacMahon, a right noble-look-

ing young man, whose Christian names give a glimpse of the strange conglomerate of royalty which he served. He came back to take up the old castle of Clenagh, and to redeem the acres. Better had he remained in foreign parts to lay his bones on some Silesian battle-field fighting the Great Frederick for Maria Teresa. Better the big war in Carinthia against the Turk than the petty strife against penal code and law process in Clare. True, Clenagh was still his own; O'Brien had kept trust. Stanislaus set up in the old castle, and for a time all went well. He was tall, good-looking, and graceful, as well it might be—the blood of beauty was in his veins. Milesian through forty known generations, and twice as many unknown ones, he had also in him the Hamilton strain, which held the blood-royal of Stuart and Bruce in its veins. He married beauty and an only daughter, Lucinda Esmonde; but all that could not shake off the grasp of the mortgagee upon Clenagh, or lift the old name to its former level. There were mortgages still running that went back to 1670, and charges for marriage portions that dated from the reign of Henry VIII.; nor could the encroachments of the new interest be successfully resisted. The documents from which this narrative is compiled contain sundry allusions to various "townslands which have been purloined by Mr. Scott and others of the adjacent neighbours."

Amid such pleasant neighbours, and with so many embarrassments, poor Stanislaus did not long hold out. It is not unlikely that the strain of

foreign blood (his mother was a German lady) may have weakened the native fibre of the MacMahons. Worry, to some natures, is more fatal than war; and in 1757 Stanislaus was added to the great majority, leaving behind him a young widow with two children—a son, Donat, afterwards a priest in Paris, and a daughter, the last of her name, who carried with her as a marriage portion to the Coppingers of Cork, some 4,000 acres of wild upland pasture, all that was saved from sale, foreclosure, and forfeit of the once wide lands of Clenagh.*

And now to the moral of our narrative—the question of the ownership and possession of the land in Ireland.

In one of his recent essays, Ruskin, speaking of the people of a country—"the ground delvers"—in distinction to the conquerors, says that while the invader, Frank, Goth, or Roman, may fluctuate hither and thither in chasing or flying troops, "the rural people must still be diligently, silently, and with no time for lamentation, ploughing, sowing, and cattle-breeding!"

And so they were in Corca Basca as elsewhere, in roughest and most outlandish fashion—growing their scanty crops farther up the hill-sides year by

* This remnant was destined in the course of time to come back again to Celtic ownership. A brother of Daniel O'Connell (the Liberator) married the grand-daughter of Stanislaus, and Clenagh stands to-day in the name of the infant son and widow of the late Morgan John O'Connell. To Mrs. M. J. O'Connell, daughter of the well-known Charles Bianconi, the writer is indebted for the family particulars above related.

year, as ever the rising tide of more prosperous acquisition forced them into loftier altitudes.

All through this eighteenth century the people—tillers of the soil—turf-cutter, potato-planter, and oat-sower—were sunk in hopeless misery. The leaders were gone, never to return, and between the new proprietors and the old poverty-stricken peasantry there was a gulf of hopeless difference.

The people could not "cotton" to the new order. The Irish peasant could serve the Norman noble with matchless fidelity. He could accept as his leaders the younger son of a Hamilton or a Herbert in Elizabeth's or James I.'s confiscations, but he could not give hand of serviceship, or heart of obedience, to the regicide of 1649, or the undertakers of 1689. Nor could he blot from his memory the race that was gone.

Ruskin says "the people of a land must plough, and sow, and cattle-raise, with no time for lamentation." They may not weep, but they will think—the ploughman as he follows the furrow will sometimes unearth a human skull; the sower will scatter his seed upon a battle-field; the herder of cattle will seek shelter from the tempest among the walls of some crumbling castle, and amid the pauses of their labours they will think—at least the Celtic peasant will, building up in his own fashion the ruined edifice of the past, endowing the old race with strength, symmetry, open-handedness, and valour that will ever show in poor comparison the "gentleman" of the present.

When the "wild geese" sailed away from

Ireland they carried with them the heart of the Irish people: the tribes lived on in a shattered and disordered peasantry; the chiefs and leaders vanished from the land; for a time there was the stupefaction of despair, and then amid the darkness and gloom of the eighteenth century the lurid lights of lawless faction and of midnight outrage began to show themselves. Towards the close of the century the master-mind of Edmund Burke could detect plainly enough the cause of the malady, while he was, like others of later date, powerless to cure it. "A plebeian oligarchy," he writes, "is a monster, and no people, not absolutely domestic, or predial slaves, will long endure it."

It was doubly unfortunate that this "plebeian oligarchy" should have been set up in Ireland before the condition of land ownership, which is to-day in vogue, should have had time to take deep root in the minds and habits of the Irish people.

When, as we have before stated, Donough-na-Glanna divided his territory of West Clare among his three sons, he was in reality adopting, for the first time, the new law of possession which marked the termination of the tribal tenure, and the substitution of landlord and tenant for chief and people. This change—the most important that any people can be called upon to conform to—has at all times evoked opposition from the tribe. The change from chief to landlord, from clansman to tenant, has not been willingly accepted even where chieftainship and landlordism have been but different titles in the same family. How much less was it

likely to prove successful where a complete change of masters supervened almost immediately upon the change of tenure. For, although the beginning of the fifteenth century witnessed the first attempt of the chiefs to place themselves in the actual ownership of the soil on which their people dwelt, it was not until two hundred years later that the full consequences of the change made themselves apparent to the people. From the close of the reign of Mary to the beginning of the reign of Anne, Ireland was a prey to almost incessant strife. The long wars of Elizabeth with Desmond and O'Neill, the conflict of James with Tyrone, the rebellion of 1641, and subsequent strife of twenty years, the struggle following the revolution of 1688—all these fierce and sanguinary wars prevented the realities of the new system being brought home to the people. At last there was peace, the peasants stood face to face with the new tenure, but the old leaders, the gentlemen who might have rendered the transition possible, who might have been accepted as landlords by the people over whom they had ruled as chiefs, had wholly vanished from the scene.

Where were they gone? We have already partly answered. They were scattered above ground and below it over half the States of Europe. O'Neill was in Rome, O'Brien in the Camp at Grenelle, the Desmond's headless body lay mouldering in the little churchyard of Killanamana, Ormond was in exile at Avignon, O'Donnell was in Spain; Nugent, De Lacy, MacMahon, Esmonde, De Burgh, Dillon, O'Connor, MacCarthy, and a

host of others were fighting and falling in the cause of every king and country save their own. They were hopelessly gone, and in their old places stood a new race of men alien in nationality, hostile in faith, opposite in sentiment to the people beneath them; men who felt and lived as a foreign garrison in the land, men who hated the people and were in turn detested by the people; men who drank "the glorious, pious, and immortal memory" on the anniversary of one king's death, with religious observance, and sat down to a dinner of calf's head on the 30th of January in mockery of another king's execution; men who stood almost as completely isolated from their fellow beings beneath them as though they had been the white garrison of a Western prairie fort amid a wilderness of Red Indians. Here, then, was lost, and lost for ever, "the touch," to use a military expression, of the Irish people. Henceforth there would be wild, spasmodic effort of law to force the reluctant people to accept "for worse," if they would not take "for better," the new order of things; there would be oscillations of government, outbreak of people's passion, repression, and the rest of it; but of the kinship that comes of common race, the bond of a faith held together, the union that holds hopes, fears, and dangers past and to come, linked in an undivided destiny, there was not to be one chord of sympathy vibrating through the social structure of Ireland. On the one side, the new "interest" would find itself year by year forced into more exclusive isolation, but growing weaker through

absenteeism, the spirit of modern opinion, and the influence of New World ideas. On the other, the people, ever drifting farther away from the memory of obedience and regard for their old masters, would become more hopelessly estranged from the classes above them, more prone to wander after wild experiments, to listen to the teaching of dangerous doctrines, to catch the echo of distant democracies, remaining deaf to the solid sound of sense that also comes from them.

Such has been the history of Ireland and its people during the last hundred and fifty years, until to-day the nation, like some ship to which movement is danger, and repose is impossible, drifts hither and thither upon a stormy ocean, her captain and officers all gone, her crew sulky and mutinous, her helm held by men who seek vainly in the darkness for those headland lights of Peace and Progress within which lie the smooth waters of Content.

"The Clan and the Boat's Crew"

1907

When asked by your secretary to read a paper before this Society in Cork, I ran over in my mind the subjects on which it was possible I might speak with a knowledge other than that gained from books. I thought of countries and peoples visited and known during years of active service, and of men with whom I had come into contact at various times, but none of these things seemed to promise what I most desired—namely, to talk to the young men of Cork about some matter which concerned themselves—something that touched their lives to-day and to-morrow, now and in the future—something of the where we are and whither we are going—for it seems to me that our eyes, mental and bodily, are a little prone to look out for things that are yet deep below the horizon, or are not even there at all, and that in this condition of day dreaming we may be in danger of forgetting where the good ship of life is bearing us, where we are at the moment, and the whither from which we have come.

Ireland has been through all her life a generous spendthrift at the world's call. Her time and thought have been given, lavishly given, in the

service of other nations. It is time for Ireland to think of giving service to herself. I do not mean a selfish service of self to self—I mean an unselfish service of self to Ireland.

When that remarkable Colonial Statesman, Sir Wilfred Laurier, was last in England, he gave expression to a thought that had a whole world of meaning in it. He said that Ireland was the only country within the limits of the Empire where Irishmen did not govern. That may have been too sweepingly put, but of this much I am certain, that if it had not been in the past for the blood, the brain and the brawn which Ireland had given to England, neither England or her Empire would be what they are to-day. I doubt, indeed, if the Empire, as distinct from England, would have had an existence at all.

And the sad part of the story has been, that this outside Empire-building has been done at the human cost, not of the contractor or the owner of the site, but chiefly at that of the mason, the hodman, and the mortar-mixer. Ireland has seldom even been thanked for her work. When the work or the fight was over, the step-sister island stepped in and took the chestnuts.

When I entered the army fifty years ago, and during the ten following years, there were still to be found in different parts of the Empire strange survivals of an earlier fifty years—veterans who fought under Nelson, Wellington, and Napier. Sometimes I came upon these old men in an Indian pensioner station, sometimes I met them in the

Canadian backwoods, or again in some Irish village, where, as one of them once described it, he was "wearing out the thread"; well, nine out of eleven of these men were Irish.

I met at Vellore, in India, an old sailor who fought in the battle of the Nile. On the shores of Lake Erie, in Canada, I met a veteran of Wellington's wars, and at St. Helena I found living in the early 'sixties, two soldiers who had stood sentry over Napoleon at Longwood.

All those were Irish peasants, the few far-scattered survivors of that wonderful infantry which had conquered India, carried Wellington from the Tagus to Toulouse, and made our Colonial Empire a reality. Their share in the spoils was not a large one. Happy if they had a bench at a cottage door to look out from in summer evenings. Less happy, as it too often came about, when the outlook was the blank wall of a workhouse yard, with the prospect of a pauper's grave at the other side of it.

Sometimes, when I have walked the squares and crescents of one of those rich English cities, to which the well-paid civil officials of the Imperial and Indian Services are wont to retire when their thirty or forty years of active life are over, I have wondered to myself if there was ever a thought given by these wealthy denizens to the men out of whose bones and blood all this material well-being had come, and then I, perhaps, saw dim and faint the picture of a cholera camp, a fever ward in a sweltering Indian hospital, with pallid, dying

faces along the walls; or, again, the carts were going by with the wounded, or the happier dead were being laid in rows in the desert sand.

If ever the thing which has been called "the pomp and circumstance of war" had any existence in the life of the soldier in the ranks, it has long since got itself promoted out of the ranks, and you must look for it to-day in Bath, Cheltenham, Brighton, or London.

I do not know whether these words of mine will reach the ears of any among those great ones whose business it is to administer the only real balance in the only real Bank of England, the rank and file of the British army, but I can assure these eminent persons (and the assurance comes from the knowledge which fifty years of seeing, hearing, living with, and reading about the subject have given me)—I can assure those eminent gentlemen that the best soldier ever given to any nation was the Irish peasant; and I can also tell them that in pulling down the cabins of those peasants, be they Irish or Scotch (the English peasant disappeared three hundred years ago), more was done to weaken the strength of the Empire, to sap the fighting power of the army, and to introduce novel factors into our military history than any enemy of England had ever succeeded in accomplishing in quite the previous one hundred years of history.

I have no intention of inflicting upon you a discourse upon any set subject. I would rather talk of things seen from our island point of view.

You know how the point of view in a physical

sense changes as we move from mile to mile, how the hill-top alters in outline and perspective, how landmarks rise, vary, and disappear. So it is with our mental impressions in the domains of history and politics. These not only vary as we ourselves move through life, but they also vary according as they are looked at by different orders of men and by people of different nations; and yet the thing itself must be always as it was.

This simple law or fact lies at the root of our difficulties in Ireland. It is this that has perplexed and will perplex Parliaments, administrations, and executives to the end of time. You have two perfectly distinct points of view on, and of, every possible subject. You have the Irish point of view and the English point of view, and these two geographically and fundamentally different view points can no more be brought into one and the same focus of sight, mental or physical, than England and Ireland can be made geographically one and the same island. It is a physical and intellectual impossibility to make these two separate standpoints one. Had this island been sixty miles more to the East, there would have been no Irish point of view. Had it lain two hundred miles more to the West the singleness of Ireland's position would not have been more pronounced than it is, but the fact of it must long ago have been admitted, ordained and adopted.

Now, I would wish you to bear in mind that two or more views of the same subject, no matter how

much they may differ, may, under the circumstances, be fairly accurate and correct, and the key to it all is that we must walk round all these subjects before we can attempt to determine, not only the comparatively easy question of the side upon which the balance of right lies, but the much more difficult matter of fixing the point beyond which some abstract right may become a positive wrong.

And that is what nearly always happens. The point is passed. Justice elated at her victory, Truth tired by the long and toilsome ascent she has made, are apt in the moment of their triumph to cloak themselves in the mantles of the giants of wrong whom they have just vanquished, and to sit down supinely in the last entrenchment to breed again a new brood of wrongdoers.

That, I take it, is the secret swing of the pendulum which made the American poet write that "Wrong was ever on the Throne," and that "Truth was ever on the scaffold." The marvel to me, as I watch the world, is the final triumph of right in a world where the opposing forces of evil are so powerful, so well organised, and so ably led.

But to return to the necessity for walking round our subjects. Nowhere does this necessity for circular exercise exist in greater strength than in Ireland. Our geographical position, our history and surroundings, make the habit of prolonged enquiry more imperative here than elsewhere. We are isolated as no other land that I know of is isolated; we cannot measure ourselves by any outside measure; our emulation must be internal.

We cannot see ourselves as others see us, or compare what we do with what other people do. We, who are probably the most emulative people in the world, have only ourselves to emulate.

This isolation has, no doubt, many possibilities of good in it, but it has also its pitfalls and dangers. Even the man who had a glass to look at himself in could go his way and soon forget what manner of man he was. Ireland has only the ocean to look at, and it is too often the cloud shadows that she sees there.

The Celt is by nature a rover; he longs to get the outer view, to escape from his double environment in being the denizen of an island which lies outside an island, to get to that place which the old peasants were wont to describe in former years as "beyant the beyants."

I would be glad to see the practice of what is called in America "study trips" for school teachers and promising pupils largely introduced into our primary and secondary schools—parties of young men carried at special low rates to France, Belgium, Holland and Denmark and the nearer provinces of Germany, not for the sole object of visiting cities and cathedrals, and picture galleries, but primarily in order to look at, and study the life of the lands through which they walked, the life of the farm-house, the village, the various methods of crops and pasture, of cattle raising, and carpentry and business, that thing we call husbandry, a word the full meaning of which is well-nigh forgotten amongst us, but upon which nevertheless depends,

as in no other word in our or in any other language, the health, strength, virility, the moral and physical well-being of all men and nations, and the only real base and foundation upon which you can build your life power with any hope of continuance and any promise of transmission here below.

Now I would invite your attention to certain salient points or principles which seem to me to mark this question of the peasant and husbandry, and to lie at the root of most, if not all, of our troubles in relation to the Government of Ireland by English ideas and precedents. The root idea in Ireland has always been the land and what the land produced, be it corn or cattle. Back into the remotest antiquity this land factor is found underlying all Irish history. The clan or the tribe system grew out of it. Kings and tribes warred for its possession. The chief and the clan were great and powerful in the exact measure of their ability to maintain or extend the boundaries of their people. The clansman, the tiller or the pasturer freely gave service and life as pawns or subordinate actors in this land fight. "Spend me and defend me" was their old motto; and it is significant of the immense difference which lay between the people of Ireland and their English invaders in Tudor times, that the latter were never able to understand what these words "Spend and defend" meant.

The Normans had known their meaning well enough, but the Tudors were of different race, and thought. Tudor supremacy really marked the end

of the Norman conquest in England in all the main features of its polity and civilisation. The reign of Henry VIII. was simply a throw back to Saxon and Danish ideals, and herein we touch the question which I have so far been leading up to—namely, the fundamental difference in the thought of the two peoples—English and Irish.

I have explained what I consider to be the Irish root idea of clan and land. We will now turn to the English view. The Saxon or English root idea has been the boat and the boat's crew. The Saxon and Norse invaders of the British Isles were sailors first of all. The oar was their spade, the boat's keel their plough, the fishes of the sea were their sheep and cattle. The crew of the boat was, in fine, the family factor, and over that family of hardy male marauders flew the flag of the Raven, fit emblem of men whose prey was all the animal produce of the earth, the cattle of the clansmen, the fat lands of the monastery, the spoils of King and Chieftain.

We are told that matter is indestructible. You may divide, sub-divide, separate and consume, but it is all there still. So I believe are the primeval instincts of man on earth—they may alter in appearance, they may develop or recede from the surface, but they are there all the same.

The dominant idea in the English brain is still that of a community which has developed the habits, the discipline and the instincts of the crew of a boat into the habits, discipline and instincts of the inhabitants of a town, changing the rude

methods of plunder by force into the modern systems of acquisition by trade and commerce. The captain and his crew have given place to the mayor and the corporation.

Here, then, we have in these two islands two diametrically opposed lines or systems of thought. The root idea of the Irish rural inhabitant is still that of the clan. Rent and riven and tossed to and fro on the spears or swords of his invaders, his instincts are still those of the country and the cattle.

Now, remember I am not entering into the question of which of those two original opposing ideals of life may be the better root instinct to start with. I am only stating what I believe to be the second great fundamental cause of difference existing between the people of the two islands, the geographical factor being the first cause.

When I look abroad over Ireland to-day, when I follow her history back through the last three or four hundred years, I find everywhere the amplest explanation of the question so often asked in Tudor and Stuart times, and so frequently repeated in our own day of, "Why was the King no better for Ireland?" Indeed, the answer is simple enough, needing no elaborate disquisition or explanation, so simple that when once the facts are grasped those elaborate explanations of cause and result only remind me of that artillery officer who, when called upon to furnish his reasons in writing for having failed to fire a salute from his guns on some important occasion, replied by giving twenty-one distinct

causes for the omission, the twenty-first being that he had no powder.

I think that if we accept the existence of the fundamental differences between the root ideas of the two peoples, not only will our present difficulties be largely explained, but we shall be better able to understand many things in past history which still perplex us.

Why, for instance, was the Norman invasion of Ireland accomplished with such comparative ease and acceptation, and why were the invasions of Elizabeth and Cromwell accompanied by terrible cruelties and extirpations? The answer is that the Norman Conquest of the island recognised the right of the clans to the possession of what I would call the three L's—their laws, their language, and their lands. It established a certain Royal overlordship of the chiefs and a certain Feudal overlordship of the clans, but it left undisturbed the three main principles of possession I have named—lands, laws, and language.

The Norman leaders soon saw that by accepting these principles of social and economic life in Ireland they could obtain for themselves something which they had not got in England—a place in the hearts of the people—and the Plantagenet Kings were quick to discover that the natural strength and the martial instincts of the Irish clansmen gave them new and powerful resources of support for the prosecution of their warlike designs in France and Scotland. They gladly accepted the formula of "Spend me and defend me," and hence it was

that within one hundred years of the coming of the Norman you find the kerns, galloglasses, and Irish men-at-arms going out in great numbers to fight against Scots, French, and Saracens, in all the many wars of the Henrys, the Edwards and the Richards, civil and foreign, from Lewes and Crecy to Agincourt and Bosworth.

Nor was it in fighting strength alone that Ireland rendered service to the Plantagenet Kings. The Pipe Rolls show the large exportation of corn and food supplies sent from Wexford, Waterford, and Cork to feed the King's soldiers in Bordeaux and the ports of Biscay.

It is strange to note the change of policy introduced under the Tudors. The Plantagenets had on the whole been content to manage Ireland under Irish ideas; they had accepted the clan, the peasant, the priest, and the Brehon. Now everything was to be changed. The root and branch policy was to be pursued, Ireland was to be made into a little Britain. The Stuarts continued what the Tudors had begun, and Cromwell came in the interlude, called "the Commonwealth," to put what was thought to be the final capping stone upon the edifice of Irish civilisation, which was really only a new name for confiscation and extirpation. It was the Boat's Crew policy brought back again, the system of the sea pirate against the land peasant.

The Norman idea of spending and defending was abolished, and the opinions of the tradesmen in government prevailed over these principles of

feudal rule, which the great Norman conqueror had derived from the teaching of the School of Charlemagne.

We have everywhere visible around us, even to this day, evidence of the effects of this gigantic change of policy. The roofless abbey, the dismantled bridge, the ruined castle; all attest the vast destruction wrought through the recrudescence of the Danish devastations, after an interval of five hundred years of mixed chief, clan, Brehon, and Feudal rule.

The new invaders developed at once the piratical instincts of their old Norse and Saxon progenitors. "Their mouths," said the Irish, "were agape" after the possessions of the Clans.

In 1850 the Earl of Desmond addressed some remarkable words to his people. Harassed, driven, despoiled and persecuted for more than twenty years earlier, he at last broke into open revolt. These were his words:—"Our rulers, ever since they renounced the Catholic religion, have scorned to regard the nobles of this land who have remained true to faith. I declare before heaven we are trampled upon by a gang of mailed marauders, who hold us in contempt. Look to the sacred order of your priesthood. Is it not despoiled by these innovators who have come among us, who punish and banish the rightful owners from their time-honoured possessions? Rights are despised, liberty is a catch-word, the civil administration is in the hands of spies, hirelings, and defamers; and, worse than all, we are denied the

right of professing our religion openly. Heresy is making rapid encroachments, and we are called upon to do homage to base-born churls who in the Queen's name mock and spurn us."

Now I might easily give you many pages of proof that every word of this protest and manifesto was well within the truth. We now know from the publication of the State papers of Elizabeth's reign that the successive boats' crews of adventurers let loose upon the unfortunate island in that long reign were not one whit behind their Norse and Saxon ancestors in their super-savage desire to slay, plunder, and torture the unfortunate people; but that is not my purpose. All that I can attempt is to sketch one of those great collective movements in history which seem to mark and measure a certain concrete epoch in the affairs of nations.

The actors in these events are not themselves always conscious of the wholeness of their policy They are for the most part impelled by some unseen force or unacknowledged instinct along the general course of the movement, and it is only when a long time has elapsed that the historian is able to group and focus the entire series into a single colossal combination. The best known poet of the Victorian age has told us that the times of Elizabeth were "spacious." Certainly, if the world be taken to denote a void, an emptiness, that reign was spacious enough in Ireland. But it was the spaciousness of death and the emptiness of annihilation. Crime, cruelty, and devastation stalked in the name of Government through the land.

Lord Deputies, Chancellors, Justices, Archbishops, Treasurers, Poets and Captains all joined in the hunt after lands, castles, abbeys and domains. "Good God," wrote one of them, appalled at the universal plunder he was beholding, "how quickly doth this country alter men's natures!"

There was no alteration. It was only a reversion to first principles—the throw back of all those high-sounding dignitaries in State and Church to the old ways of Norse and Saxon ancestry. The State Papers of Elizabeth are one long series of petitions for plunder. "Your Majesty," wrote one Lord Deputy, "has little left to reign over in Ireland, save carcases and ashes." "The wolf and the rebel lodge in one inn," wrote a Judge of Assize from his court in Kinsale, "with one diet and one kind of bedding. It would pity the Lords Justices' hearts to see the calamity of the subject."

Throughout all this terrible time the Queen herself was being robbed and deceived by her officials. At last the truth broke upon her. "I fear," she wrote, "it may be said to us as to the Roman, you it is that are in fault, who have committed your flocks not to shepherds, but to wolves."

Famine followed war, and pestilence, as usual, stalked abreast of famine. This city of Cork was then a small town. Here is the account which a President of Munster gives us of it: "Although the town is but one short street, the plague has carried off 72, 66, and 62 in three successive days." That was in the year 1582, when the same pen reports: "Thirty thousand dead of famine within

this half year in Munster, besides numbers that are hanged and killed."

Truly, these were "spacious times" in Ireland. But you may think, perhaps, that these evidences of the Boat's-Crew System of Government were altogether out of date in our time, and that the methods of Tudor and Cromwellian captains could not be practised to-day. Undoubtedly, that would be correct as to method, but spaciousness can be arrived at under less drastic conditions. A country may be depleted of its wealth and its people by legislation, and by economic environment, as well as by the sword and the spoiler.

When I was a young man there were picturesque people in the Italian mountains called brigands. Every now and again those nice-looking fellows swooped down upon some English traveller's carriage, robbed the nobleman's purse, made gallant speeches to his wife and daughters, and went back to their hills with the proceeds of the robbery.

Of course, that is no longer possible; but if you go to Italy now you will find all along the frontier Custom House officials, no longer picturesque, who, under the name of *doganieri*, will perform the same process of purse depletion upon you.

We know how to arrive at spaciousness to-day without force. We do it by tickling. We tickle with a name of which not one man in ten knows the meaning. "The incidence of taxation" is a favourite phrase among our boat's crew to-day. I remember once discussing with a very able German

officer the period in history known as "The Thirty Years' War," and the part taken in that conflict by Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden naturally came under review. I spoke of the disinterested service which the Swedes had rendered to Germany in the struggle, as I had been taught in our histories. My companion smiled. "Yes," he replied, "the Swedes at that time certainly saved our Lutheran religion for us, but they left us without a silver spoon. You will find all the old German silver in Sweden to-day."

I do not think that the peculiar instincts inherent to rule under the hardy Norsemen have ever been more accurately illustrated. We can be eminently religious in our abstractions.

Now, in dividing and defining the rival instincts of the people of those two islands, and giving to them the names of the "Boat's Crew" and "Clan," I by no means desire to put one before the other in matters of morality or human wisdom. Each system has, and had, its weak points, both have had their virtues. Honest men are to be found in each camp. But that is not quite the question. You do not make laws for honest men; they are a law to themselves, and in addition they are somewhat rare. What I am trying to explain is that the two root ideas of life which have come down to the inhabitants of the two islands from a remote past are to-day still operating and producing a distinct variety of thought and opinion between the two peoples, of which they themselves are not conscious.

I put in opposition to the silver spoon illustration

of my theory, one on the Clan side. One hundred years ago this City of Cork was a great centre of the provision industry. Immense herds of cattle and flocks of sheep were driven from all parts of Munster and made into beef and mutton for exportation. A war, begun against French democracy, and which lasted nearly as long as the Thirty Years' War, was then raging throughout Europe. Prices were prodigiously high. The large graziers of the time were in the habit of coming in numbers to this city, and the sales, the fun, and the feasting went on for days together. I have been told that a favourite toast of the time was: "If this be war, may there never be peace!"

These men were mostly Catholics. The war then raging was enabling the Government of the time to put off indefinitely the consideration of Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary reform. Yet the gentlemen of cattle, if not of Clan, were quite willing that the war of the classes against the masses should go on for ever—so long as salted beef was in demand.

Whenever you get down to the bedrock of human nature you will find the factor of the personal and purse interest at the moment outweighing all other sentiments in the minds of average men. It is only the few who are able to lift themselves above themselves, and, as the poet said, "to see the right and do it." Therein, indeed, lies the chief danger to democracy.

These rocks of self-interest must be numerous in the great stream of democratic political life. They

are at once the touchstones of true genius in statesmanship, as they are also the wrecking-rocks of the men who are only political charlatans.

What we are beholding in America to-day is only what the Roman philosophers knew two thousand years ago. We easily invent new names for old things. When the hewer of wood becomes what they call "a log-roller," and the drawer of water turns the stream of his intelligence into the "watering of shares" the public had better look out for its spare cash. That is what is doing to-day in America. "The evil that men do lives after them."

The moral sense and physical stamina of the people of those islands are now being eaten into by the canker of drink, because successive Governments since that war of one hundred years ago have been obliged to coquette with the drunkard in order to pay old war scores. That part of the war has "gone on for ever." But let us return to our peasant.

I have said that the clansman in time became the peasant, and that the boat's crew grew into the citizen. But there came also in time a wider difference between these two classes of men. Both might remain equally brave, both might have been equally ready to fight, but that was only part of the question.

War wants a good deal more than the will. Emerson said that Napoleon conquered Europe by the bivouac! It was true. But who conquered the bivouac! The French peasant, the man of the old

hard days, the man of the dark loaf, the mender of roads, whose gaunt picture Dickens drew for us in the "Tale of Two Cities"—he conquered the bivouac.

There is a curious document among the State Papers of the reign of Henry VIII., in which some man writing from Ireland urges upon the King the conquest of Ireland because of the great increase in the armed strength of his kingdom which those hardy clansmen would bring him. "With these men as soldiers," the writer goes on, "His Highness might conquer Europe, and even hope to be proclaimed "Emperor of Jerusalem."

But the Second Tudor was not exactly like that kind of king. The Defender of Faith and the Pattern of Morals seemed always to have had an instinctive dread and suspicion of the peasant.

Under the appellation of sturdy beggars he and his daughter strung up many tens of thousands of them along the public highways of the kingdom. He wanted spoils without the trouble of having to fight for them. It would be easier to rob the churches and monasteries at home than to bother about temples or tombs in Jerusalem, and besides he had too many domestic affairs of the Harem to attend to in Westminster to allow time to go crusading against the Turk in the East. It was Henry VIII. and his daughter Elizabeth who between them ended the English peasant.

There is a curious letter existing, written by Burleigh to his son, the younger Cecil, in which the youth is told that the days of the soldier are gone, not to return; that the profession of arms is

as a chimney-flue which will no longer draw, and that he (the son) had better light the fire of his life under some other chimney.

This remarkable expression of the intimate mind of the man who had the largest share of the direction of English policy, foreign and domestic, in the reign of Elizabeth goes a long way towards explaining the whole chapters of military failure and misfortune to the Crown of England from the death of Elizabeth to the execution of Charles the First. For the peasant and his son, the soldier, there was to be no further use in the world! While the younger Cecil was still in the full tide of his delusions on this head there came an obscure law student into Lincoln's Inn, who was destined twenty years later, to show them all the other side of the picture. One Oliver Cromwell by name, of land and clan by birth and ancestry, but with sundry grafts in parentage and tuition destined together to make him the most extraordinary combination of boat's crew and clan propensities such as England had never known before, and may never know again.

I said when I began these observations that it was full time for Ireland to think of herself and to work for herself. That thought seems to me to contain the substance and sum of the whole problem before her.

How is Ireland to put in practice this seemingly simple formula of thought and action? What are the things that stand against her—obstacles in the road of self-thought and self-action?

First of all I would say that there is a manifest insincerity existing between the thought and the action of many of our people. There is a great deal of talk about supporting Irish industries, but I find not only English goods all over the country, but the very worst class of English goods that are to be found in any part of the world.

Then let us take the question of drink. To whatever side I turn I find romance (I will not use a stronger word) abounding in relation to that question of questions. What is the use of talking about the increase of temperance and spread of enlightenment and a dozen other delusions when the total drink bill of the nation stares us in black and white at some fourteen millions sterling?

Dublin, a city exceeding in glaring evidences of its profound poverty any other city I have ever seen, spends annually, I am informed, one million three hundred thousand pounds on drink. A writer in that journal of clear thinking and hard hitting—*The Leader*—recently showed that Ireland pays at the present moment the enormous sum of over fifty millions a year for foreign articles of luxury, food, clothing, footwear, &c., most of which could be produced at home. Are we never to awake out of the profound trance into which our unhappy past seems to have cast us?

A few years ago I gave a good deal of study to that momentous period in Irish history—the Civil Wars of 1641-1653. I arose from that study with the profound conviction that Ireland in those dozen years had thrown the game away a dozen times

when the ball was at her feet. Over and over again "they chanced it," as the saying is, and they lost.

I know well the part that chance must play in human effort, and more in war effort than in any other; but that is all the greater reason why chance should be watched with the most jealous eye—cribbed, cabined, and confined within the smallest possible limits, his rope shortened and his halter tightened to the last hole.

But whenever you dive into Irish history, save with one or two great exceptions, you will find every chance given to chance; and, what is more, whenever you come upon a case where chance was not given a loose rein, the men who held chance by the head had been trained abroad. Owen Roe O'Neill, his nephew, Colonel Hugh O'Neill, Sarsfield, Inchiquin, "the burner"—these men left little to chance.

In what can we find the antidote to this fatal mental habit? In two things—in training and discipline. They are two names for the same thing. We have the very best material lying at our hands. The stone in the quarry is splendid and durable, but to cut and shape it into the forms from which the edifice of our national life is to be built, means deep and anxious thought, and long and laborious effort. I look around me in Ireland, and I see only two adequately trained and disciplined bodies existing here—the priests and the police, and in the former category I include the ministers of every denomination. For the rest I fail to find the idea

of firm comradeship and combination in a common cause—that cause serviceship to Ireland.

Whenever along Irish roads I meet children going to or returning from the National Schools I look with admiration upon those bright, eager faces, lit with the wonderful hope of childhood, speaking and sparkling in every feature, and then I think with a pang of the lives that are before those little ones. I see with something of dread the time which is so close at hand to them when those fresh, expectant minds will be brought face to face with the real facts in the lives of the Irish people, when the knowledge they are now daily acquiring will be confused and contradicted and destroyed at every turn by the other knowledge which the public-house, the street corner, and the half-penny paper will give them—the knowledge, too, more slowly acquired, and there is no outlet in Ireland for their lives, and that most, if not all, of the brain pictures which the school lessons have drawn upon their minds will have to be rubbed out. Then I ask myself why is this cruel fate in store for these children. And the answer comes, because we have no adequate means in Ireland of following on these primary educational steps in the ladder of learning; because the children will have to drop out altogether from the priceless privilege of collective training and emulative discipline, and go their several ways practically untrained into a wide waste of individualism.

Is it, I ask you, any wonder that under such conditions at the opening of their lives one of two

things should happen to the majority of those children? Either that they shall seek beyond the Atlantic the openings which they are unable to find at home, or that many of them should sink back in disappointment into the old lethargies and environments that they see around them, and the cruellest part of the thing is that it was not always so. I read the other day in an English college magazine a description written by a gifted lady of that vast pile of ruins in Clanwilliam, Tipperary, known as Athassel Abbey. "Nothing is left," she wrote, "to show where so much life had busied itself. This monastery of Athassel, once numbered among the four or five greatest in these islands, is the most forlorn ruin of the Western World. Here among the few delicate fragments of this earliest Gothic ivied ruin, weeds topped with flowers, the height of a man, throng the enclosure that was once the middle of the cloisters, and cattle stray in the sanctuary of the shattered church. Such weeds grow as in no other country, 'so beautiful, so tall, so sad.'" And this most faithful picture of Athassel, as it stands in its desolation to-day by the winding Suir, could be repeated of ruins, great and small, scores of times in every barony and hundreds of times in every county in the island. What has happened to pile ruin upon ruin, and grow weed over weed in this, once the most fruit-ful, bird-ful, fish-ful, animal-ful, and man-ful land in Europe?

A very small thing has happened, is happening, and will continue to happen, until the people of this island open their eyes and look facts in the

face. The life-blood has been slowly drawn, almost imperceptibly sucked out of the body of the nation. Drip—drip—drip—as the everlasting drop of rain eats away the granite rock, so the eternal economic waste has slowly sapped the body, the brain, the blood and the breed of the Irish people—that is all that has happened.

Go back with me a moment to the geographic isolation of which I spoke to you at the beginning of this paper. See how from Caithness to Cornwall the larger and inner island encompasses and overlaps the outer and smaller one. Then people the inner and larger earth-unit with men in whose veins runs the blood of the old boats' crews, men accustomed to pull together in modern business efforts, as of old their forefathers pulled at the oar—men who to-day watch the tides and winds of trade and commerce as keenly as of yore their ancestors watched the ebb and flow of the sea, and the currents and the winds that gave them access to their plunder havens.

Again, people the smaller earth-unit with the descendants of the clans and tribes, with men, who, whatever may be their virtues—and they are many—have never in their history possessed the inestimable quality of pulling together for any common and continuous purpose.

And I ask you is it a matter of surprise or subject for astonishment that you shall find this isolated and outer community suffering in trade, pinched in progress, thwarted in development, disorganised, disjointed, undisciplined, utterly unable

to make head against preponderating and enveloping forces, social and economic, conscious of poverty through the physical effects of its presence; conscious, too, that they are being "done," as it is vulgarly said, in some method or manner which they cannot exactly follow through its varied ramifications, ascribing often to visible principalities and powers causes which are more subtle in origin, more insidious in their operations, and more disastrous in their effects, than any open or visible acts of maladministration could possibly be.

There would be little use in my thus laying before you what I conceive to be some at least of the reasons underlying failure and decay in Ireland to-day if I did not make some attempt to indicate the direction in which the cure of these long accumulating evils might be looked for.

Swift's remedy for Irish economic grievances—"That we should burn everything English except coal," is as useless to-day as when it was uttered. Such things make epigrams, but they also make fools. There are better and less inflammable methods of procedure.

Let us, I would say, begin by copying our cousins of the Boat's Crew—let us pull together and in silence.

"The Gauls," says an old writer, "march openly to battle." Foolish tactics on the part of the Gauls. So much so, indeed, that you will find nine times out of ten they were beaten. If Ireland wished she could begin her cure to-morrow. The disease is visible on every side. You need go but

a few yards to find its symptoms. They come to meet you at the first railway station, in the first village, at the first street corner. I never quite realised what the wisdom of the Serpent meant until I came to study Ireland in Ireland.

St. Patrick, as everybody knows, banished serpents from Ireland. I have come to think it was his one great mistake. He drove out the toads, too; they were no loss to us; and had he driven out the toadies also we could have spared them; but the snakes—no; we want a little of the serpent's wisdom. Among other things it might teach us what our cousins know so well—namely, to use their enemies. In Ireland we only abuse them—the difference is that of the two first letters of the alphabet, but it is the A B C and the rest of the alphabet of success.

"Am I to call that fellow my cousin?" asked the young King Louis the Fourteenth of his Minister Mazarin. He was speaking of Oliver Cromwell "Call him your brother, sire," replied the Cardinal, "if to do so will advance your interests."

But to come back to the bread and butter of the question, for, if you will only look after that in earnest, all the other things that are born of brain and brawn will follow. No land under the sun holds within it a larger store of the things whose possession go to meet the needs of a man in life. If another deluge submerged all the earth and left only this little island outstanding, she could supply all the wants (excepting tea and coffee) of twice, and, perhaps, three times, the number of her

present inhabitants. Sugar she could have in abundance through the beet-root. Tobacco grows rankly in her rich lands. Nearly every commodity necessary to civilised man are her's, and all, or almost all, are of the best.

Do not imagine that I am blind to that long and dark succession of events, historical, political, religious and social, which for fully four hundred years have cast upon Ireland a shadow that could pass at the first rising of the sun of justice above her horizon. I know but too well what that long night has cost us, and what it is still costing us in our lives to-day, in every thought within our brains and every action of our body.

With little interruption since the death of the last Plantagenet King, Ireland has seen the best instincts and the purest aspirations of her people bent to their own undoing. The qualities which in countries of happier destiny have led to the advancement and elevation of the people, to the enlightenment and prosperity of the citizen, have here, too often, brought neglect, penury, or ruin to them; and that was only one side of the picture—promotion, protection, position, these were the rewards of the men who sold, betrayed, or abused her.

Not virtue's own embodiment could have withstood the shock or the sapping of centuries of such terrible misdoing. Is it to be wondered at that such a record should have left this island almost a social and economic wreck upon the face of the world—that we should be to-day beholding the

strange spectacle of a pyramid upon its apex!—that we should be spectators before a stage on which the devil seems so often to miss the worst and hindmost, and to catch the foremost and the best; that our graves seem to refuse to bury their dead, and that the ashes of forgotten fires seem to have caught the deathless qualities of some never extinct volcanic mountain?

But I have taken up too much of your time. Some other day it may be given me to extend these remarks into more detailed suggestions and wider proposals. What you, the young men of Ireland (for I speak to others through you) have to do is to examine under the microscope the problem of Ireland's economic and social position as it stands to-day, putting aside from your minds every other question or consideration—the problem of how to lessen and stop emigration, of how to lessen or destroy drunkenness, of how to subdue the spirit of gambling and betting, and the insanity of the thing they call "sport," which seems to me, when I read of it in the public journals, and turn from the page to look at the real condition of the island, to be a gigantic realisation of a whole people fiddling and dancing while all their bogs and houses and barns are burning.

It is to you, young men, that we must look for the recruits who will do battle with those evils. We of the older race are passing. You have opportunities of study and examination that did not belong to us. Avenues of knowledge are opening to you such as we never dreamt of entering. The

stored literature and wisdom of the world's life are at your service; and what a glorious and irresistible call is sounding in your ears!

Ireland asks you to help her. Emerging from the darkness of an almost interminable night, she stands dazed and bewildered in the new-born daylight, scarce knowing whither to turn in this her fresh-found dawn of freedom.

Are you going to stand by and watch with careless curiosity or selfish indifference where these uncertain steps will lead her, giving no hand to that mother, old as the hills that encircle you, but young, too, as the shamrocks now springing into earliest leaf upon your hills? No, I do not believe that that will be your part. But remember, in order to guide you must be guided; in order to teach you will have to learn; in order to lead you will first have to follow.

A Ramble through Belgian Battle Fields

AND A FEW WAYSIDE THOUGHTS

1865

Old battle fields are strange places. There has only been a village with its little street, its church, its pothouse, a few cottages in the midst of gardens, hedges of hawthorn and elders, a blacksmith's forge, and a graveyard full of mounds and nettles—close by, perhaps, there is a river, or a road leads to a great city or mighty fortress.

One day there comes a vast crowd of men and horses, the church and the cottages are full of soldiers, guns roll through the narrow street, horses are picketed in the gardens, and the fields around are black by day and red by night with the figures and the fires of an army; the villagers fly from their homes, the walls are loopholed, garden hedges are cut through, and the black muzzles of great guns frown behind red earthworks.

All at once these mouths speak, the horses charge, shell and shot crash through the red tiles, bullets whistle and ping through hedge-row and orchard, the graveyard has more dead upon its surface than below, men slaughter each other in

passages and outhouses, roofs are on fire, blood is on the pavement, wounded men crave water from the duck-pond, for a battle is being fought, and to win, or keep this village, is to win, or keep a kingdom; no one ever heard of it before, but henceforth history will have its name; golden letters will flaunt it upon silken standards, a prince or a duke will take his title from it, maps will mark it with crossed swords, and to-morrow when its people come out from their hiding-places, and seek their homes again, they will find them ruined, blood-stained, but famous.

Fontenoy.

It is the field of Fontenoy—the sun has gone down behind the tall church spire of Antoine, and twilight thickens over ridge and valley—one by one the objects grow dim around, and a white mist, like the ghost of battle, creeps up from the swampy hollow which proved so disastrous to the English cavalry on the morning of the fight. Curious that twilight and mist should make clearer the sight I see, for, in spite of the gloom, the gently sloping ground seems peopled with the old long waist-coated soldiery of the Georges, and the Dutch, and Ligonier, and the dark lines of the French batteries are all before me. Over the fog down by Vezon, Cumberland is learning the lesson that there is no royal road to fighting—a lesson which eleven months later he will turn to some account against a Highland rabble upon a dreary Scottish moor. Yonder is Saxe, in his litter, sick and in pain, but

still with the remnant of his vast strength bearing him bravely through the day; like Cumberland, he is a king's son, too, but in a different way, and the art of war, which we in England fancied a royal baby imbibed at his mother's breast, has been learned by him long ago in the woods of Malplaquet, at Stralsund by the wintry Baltic, and far down in Hungary, when the Turks were battling at Belgrade, against Eugène and his Austrians. He is young still, and yet only five years of his dream remain to him,* but to-day, though in pain, he spends the best hour of it all, winning for himself a pedestal in history, and for his master, half a score of the richest towns in Flanders.

There is fierce riding and much gesticulation amongst the plumed gentlemen of France, and there are many pretty speeches being made, despite the balls which fly uncomfortably thick from yonder column of fourteen thousand English, which has wedged on into the centre of the French position. "Gentlemen of the French Guard, fire!" roars out Lord Charles Hay; and Comte d'Auteroche, waving his feathered hat, answers, "We cannot fire; be pleased to fire yourselves!" They are only fifty paces asunder; and when the English fire they do it with some effect, for thirty officers, and the Duc de Grammont and five hundred and eighty soldiers are down in the young corn, whose green

* When Saxe lay on his death-bed, he said one morning to his physician, "Doctor, I have had a fine dream." "Then you have slept?" replied the physician. "No, no," returned the Marshal, "I mean my life has been a fine dream."

blades are speckled red with the bluest blood of France. Plenty of good blood is flowing fast enough elsewhere, over the slope and plateau, for the Maison du Roi is there, and the Swiss and the volunteers of Saxe, and half the young gallants of the Court, and the King has come from Versailles, and brought his Dauphin to see the fight, aye, and some of the royal baggage, too, which we must not speak about just now.

Louis is over yonder at Notre Dame du Bois and the Dauphin is with him, making ever so many pretty speeches, according to the story books, but, despite fine speeches and riding, and gesticulation, the English column is getting uncomfortably close. "What is to be done?" asks the King, looking anxiously towards Calonne, where his tête-du-pont marks the lazy Scheldt and the road to Tournay. "Bring up the Maison du Roi," says the Duc de Richelieu, "and the Irish," says Count Lally; and they do bring them up in front and in flank, and with some effect, too; for back over the ridge and down the slope goes the English column, reeling, sick, and bleeding at many wounds, till under the ramparts of Ath, full twenty miles away, Cumberland and Waldeck cry "Halt" to their beaten army. Oh, how they fumed in England upon hearing the result of that day's fighting on this gently sloping plain! It wasn't the style of thing they were accustomed to in the old days when Te Deums were chanted for Blenheim, and Ramilies, and Oudenarde, and Malplaquet—so far, this Hanoverian experiment had been dubious enough.

Court morals were scarce better, and now the Te Deums would be all on the other side. But, never mind, ye men of England! there are days coming on, and fast enough, too, when this fight of Fontenoy will be forgotten amidst the wild tumult of fiercer battles, when around on every side from Tournay, to Mons, by Nivelles, and on even to Brussels, almost over this same ground, English soldiers will again muster hurriedly during a short summer's night to battle for the grandson of him, who here, with the help of Saxe, and a score of regiments from an Island, where misery and poverty could then, as now, breed bravery, won this fight at Fontenoy.

Malplaquet.

Close to the old cathedral church, and near the Gothic Place, in the ancient city of Mons, a lofty tower lifts its great bells and giant clock high over house-tops and surrounding steeple. Some three hundred years ago, the foundations of this tower were laid deep in the rocky hill of Mons, and if sight of battle and sound of siege can give claim to historic celebrity, few buildings can boast more renown than La Tour St. Wadru.

English and French, Dutch and German, Spaniard and Walloon, have marched and countermarched, fought and fallen within sound of its mellow chimes, around it lies the "Cock-pit of Europe," and each window at its summit seems to have been a stage box of the performance.

Look south, Malplaquet is before you—west,

Jemappes lies almost underneath. Two curious scenes in the great Drama, called History—one closing a long war, the other opening a longer one. All quiet enough now looks the undulating ground beyond Frameries, and the smoke of Bavay hangs lightly on the horizon. Yet, that broken ground saw wild work enough one foggy morning in September, just one hundred and fifty-five years ago: 1709, and another campaign opening. In spite of Blenheim and Ramilies, Turin, and Oudenarde, and half a dozen others—in spite of courtiers and courtezans—France is still able to muster one hundred thousand men to meet Messieurs Eugène and Marlborough and their high mightinesses of Holland, who, as usual, have got half Europe at their backs—one hundred thousand—but only recruits; the veterans are long since gone—still, French recruits have a wonderful knack of fighting, and there have even been times when a French boy was more than a match for a German man. Villars, doubtful of his men, half fears a fight, burrowing over yonder at Bavay in a vast network of entrenchments, but Eugène and Marlborough want a battle, for the first ever loved fighting, and the last thinks Whig influence declining at St. James, where Tallard, the Blenheim prisoner, is doing more harm to the allied cause on the Thames than ever he did on the Danube. "Let us go and take Mons," said Eugène to Marlborough, "and perhaps this devil of a fellow will tire of being so prudent." So they move from Tournay to Fontenoy, which has yet to be, by

Jemappes, which lies still deper in the womb of time, and "sit down," as the phrase runs, before this old town where Grimaldi with five thousand men has taken post. Then from Bavay, Villars moves cautiously up, and, gathering together all their scattered outposts, French, English, Dutch, and German, are grouped on the plains of Malplaquet, little short in number of three hundred thousand men.

It is the 11th of September, and a thick fog covers the ground. "At eight o'clock we dispelled it," writes Eugène "by a general discharge of all our artillery." Germans on right, English in centre, Dutch on left. The French between the wood of Tanniers and that of Sars, and all the woods, and the space which lay between, fenced in with levelled trees and bristling with cannon. "It was the most deliberate, solemn, and well ordered battle I have ever seen," writes Blackadder, the Scotch Puritan Colonel, "a noble and fine disposition, and as finely executed. Everyone was at his post and I never saw troops engage with more cheerfulness, boldness, and resolution—for myself, I never had a more pleasant day in all my life." And never was there a more bloody day; never was the "Cock-pit" more uselessly saturated with human blood—eleven thousand Dutch fell at Tanniers alone. "Almost the whole Dutch force lay extended on the ground," is Eugène's graphic account of it. One regiment loses eight-tenths of its officers—Tullibardine is killed, Eugène wounded, Villars wounded—all day long through

woods, hedges, villages, holes, triple entrenchments, and abattis, the fight goes on, wherever the ground is open the French Maison du Roi and the Allied Cavalry furiously mingle, and far into the afternoon Europe toils against France, and half a dozen nationalities strew Malplaquet with their dead, because the Pyrenees are thought to be very necessary mountains.

"I think it is not too much to estimate the loss of both armies at forty thousand men," says Eugène; "those who were not killed died of fatigue; I gave some rest to the remains of my troops, buried all I could, and then marched to Mons." Marched to Mons and took it after twenty-seven days of siege; La Tour St. Wadru, you may be sure, rang out its welcome to the Germans, and dozed off into silence again—and what says Villars of this fight at Malplaquet? "If it pleases God," he writes to the king, "to favour your Majesty with the loss of another such battle, your enemies will be destroyed." He did not err much.

Jemappes.

And now move a few paces to the right, and look out from the western window on the sunlit plain below. Three miles from Mons stands the village of Jemappes, a village of tall chimneys, sending volumes of black smoke into the clear blue sky, a village of much industry, and of many memories. Here is a view which this west window of St. Wadru once had. Two armies in line of battle, and for a wonder no red coats—only the blue of

Republican France, and the white clad soldiers from the Danube. From Cuesmes to Jemappes the Austrians hold the pear-shaped ridge which lies west of Mons—opposite, Dumouriez has drawn up his volunteers, the right to attack Cuesmes, the centre Flenu, the left Jemappes. There are forty thousand Frenchmen, and scarce half as many Austrians, but Duke Albert holds the ridge, and the black muzzles of fourteen heavy batteries frown ominously down upon the half-disciplined volunteers, who, on this damp, cold, foggy November morning are to win the first of that wondrous series, which will close three and twenty years later at an unknown hamlet called Mont St. Jean. The first of the series, and the others will follow in quick succession; I say the first, because Valmy's cannonade was scarce a battle, but his fight here at the wood of Flenu, this charge of the young volunteers, singing the Hymn of the Marseillaise, from Cifley to Cuesmes, this is a battle of a new order, and through the smoke and fog of that November morning a glimpse reaches us of other fights in a gigantic age which is drawing nigh. Who are these soldiers who sing while they fight? They are children of the Revolution. And who are those who stand against them? They are the old soldiers of Divine Right. Precision against rapidity, pipeclay against patriotism, Frederick going out, Napoleon coming in. This giant Revolution is only an infant, yet the old men are unequal to it. Here it is over the frontier at Mons. Four years hence it will be at Mantua, eight at the Pyramids, twelve at

Vienna, sixteen at Berlin, twenty at Moscow, and there it ends—perhaps. I wonder if any one amongst the Austrian batteries on the ridge, or in the blue-coated column in the valley, had even that day a faint notion of the time which was at hand. Poor Dumouriez little understood the true meaning of the song which gave him victory. "The Republic is a mere chimera," he says. "I was only deceived by it for three days." Alas! he was never so much deceived as at the moment when he spoke these words. Confident of his mission, full of weaning France from the Revolution, and bringing her back a repentant child to the foot of a Bourbon throne—believing he could play with a fierce young giant the same game which Monk played with a worn-out and decrepid commonwealth—until all of a sudden, over there, in the low swampy meadows of Condé, young Davoust's bullets came whistling into his hermaphroditic staff,* and a canal † bank robbed the guillotine of another head, to give it decently to earth thirty years later in the quiet graveyard of a Berkshire village. Well, Dumouriez was not the only one who made that mistake either. Over in England

* At Jemappes, two young French ladies, named Fernig, served with their father upon the staff of General Dumouriez.

† At the moment when Dumouriez was about to carry into execution his long contemplated desertion to the allied side, he was met near Condé by Capt. Davoust, who commanded a small body of men. The future victor of Eckmuhl did not long hesitate as to his movements. He ordered his men to fire upon the General and his staff. Some were shot down; the others sought safety in flight, Dumouriez only escaping by swimming his horse across a canal.

about this time—aye, and for a good many years after—we were indulging in strange delusions with regard to this hurricane which men called the Revolution.

Nelson thought it nearly dead in '95; ten years later he himself lay dying in the dark cockpit of a ship named *Victory*—outside, the hush of a mighty struggle that had been, lay brooding over the water, and yet even then, with another name and in another garb, the Revolution was swooping down towards Vienna, and Austerlitz already loomed upon the horizon. Yes, there was the strange vitality of a living truth moving the haggard masses in that terrible time. It lay under the ruins of the Bastille, under the massacre of the prisoners, under the basket of the guillotine, under all the "red ruin and breaking down of laws" with which the eighteenth century of Christ's Dominion closed over the world.

Do we know the full meaning of that word Revolution yet? It is doubtful—it is even more than doubtful, we are not altogether so enthusiastic upon some hobbies as we were. Divine Right would not, perhaps, take us such a wild goose chase as it did under an imbecile King, and an obedient Commons, some seventy years ago—but we are still distant from the day when we can hear this word Revolution without feeling a thrill of horror, seeing more of September 2nd than of August 10th or June 20th, looking more to the debtor side of blood than to the credit side of freedom, and thinking of a murdered king instead of a liberated people.

It is the old, old story, which Shakespeare has so well told for us: from '93 to '15 we made "liars of our memory," and now "we credit our own lie." Truth may be stranger than fiction, but fiction is often stronger than truth, and it sometimes takes ever such a long time to read aright the logic of facts. But I am forgetting—so think the bells, at least; for with many loud vibrations they rouse me from my reverie, and the rafters shake, and the great tower seems to quiver as innumerable tongues fling down the hour of eleven upon the roof-tops beneath.

Hung by German hands while Mons was still a German fortress, these bells have chimed the hour to many a generation. Through "every swift vicissitude of changeful time unchanged they've stood," and Villars and Vendôme, Bouffleurs and Eugène, Marlborough and Cumberland, Saxe, Clairfait and Dumouriez, have heard one after the other Time's heavy hand tell off the passing hour on these great bells, which themselves seem to take no heed of time, sleeping aloft amidst the dusty rafters of St. Wadru's Tower. Where the fight which opened the conquering career of the Revolution once raged, there now burns many a furnace-fire, fed from the rich veins of coal which lie deep beneath the ridge of Jemappes, and from Flenu to Cuesmes the smoke of industry hangs almost as thickly now as ever did the smoke of cannon on the day of battle. There is one solitary advantage which the losing army has over the winning one—it has not to bury its own dead—that meritorious

work of charity usually devolves upon the winning side, and to dig a trench and to crowd bodies of friends and foes into its dull depths are works which the victor of to-day has often to execute on to-morrow. But at Jemappes the dead pits had already been dug deep and dark enough—where coal had been taken up dead bodies could be put down; so into the shafts of three coal mines went twelve thousand men and horses, and German and Frenchmen found alike their level under the hill which they had died to win or keep.

If any wanderer shonld, in this age of hurried travelling from one capital to another, think fit to pause a while by the tower-crowned hill of Mons, wishing to see the scene where the Revolution first measured its strength aggressively against confederated Europe, let him not seek the battle field itself—huge piles of rubbish—the navvy with his barrow—tall chimneys ever asmoke—gaunt brick factories and flaming furnaces—dust, smoke and smuts—all these he will find from Cuesmes to Jemappes, but let him in the early light of a summer morning ascend the worn steps of La Tour St. Wadru and take his station in the deep recess of the western window under the clock—then he will have beneath a glorious prospect—glorious even for him to whom the past is a blank, but oh! how glorious to him who can still see a faint vision of the blue-coated volunteers of the Revolution, and can sit amidst the dusty rafters with half the history of Europe lying in the mists of morning at his feet.

Ligny and Quatre Bras.

An autumn evening, and the sun going down in a haze of golden light, over the scattered trees, where once had been the wood of Boissu—evening, the ploughman ending his work, and the partridges commencing theirs—a perfume of clover blossom, a rustle of leaves from the trees along the roadside, and over all, a sense of mournful quiet which is nowhere more profoundly felt than on a scene of bygone battle. In a field to the left of the road which runs south from the village of Genappe to the village of Frasnes, and, within a very short distance of the hamlet of Quatre Bras, a man marked with dust, and bearing traces of fatigue, is engaged in an occupation which, though apparently unmeaning, seems at least to interest him. He is looking at the landscape. He has come a very long way, and the heat, which during the day had been intense, has done more to fatigue him than either dust or distance. If any police inspector, or commissary, misled by the strange garb which this man wore, and by the broken language which he spoke, had followed his footsteps since the early morning, deeming his presence in the land to bode no good to prince or peasant, a strange medley of confused ideas would have rewarded, in all probability, his labours. At nine o'clock in the morning he might have overheard this stranger enquiring of some wayfarer in the outskirts of Fleurus, the road to Sombreffe—shortly afterwards he would have seen him closely inspecting the exterior of a house in

which history says the Emperor Napoleon slept after his last day of victory at Ligny. A little later he might have again observed him crossing the ridge of ground by the Tomb, and, under a burning sun, descending the slight incline which leads to the village of Ligny—later again he might have seen him ascending the slopes of Bry and pausing long amid the stubble ridges around the mill of Bussy—later still he would have seen him at various places along the great paved highway which runs nearly east and west from Sombreffe to Quatre Bras—and still later, when the fiery sun was going down in the west, beyond Nivelles, he would have again seen this solitary wayfarer upon the wide undulating battle plain which stretches from Quatre Bras to Frasnes.

Yet, in all the journey of that hot September day, in every question asked of peasant or passer-by, there was no reason for suspicion or alarm—the stranger was only a soldier treading in peace the same ground which other soldiers had trodden in war—looking at fields upon which brave men had looked for the last time, and toiling along roads over which armies had toiled, fainting from defeat, or flushed with victory. He had a little of the enthusiastic in his nature, and could see in the stubble hill of Ligny the battle ridge of Blucher's defeat; he had a little of the imaginative, too, and the poplar trees rustling around the small enclosures of the village could recall the thunder storm in the June evening when the Old Guard, mounting from the flaming houses, pierced the Prussian centre,

and Cuirassiers, whose armour glimmered in the twilight, rolled back the Hulans of Blucher from Bry to Bussy. He had read in earlier times and in distant lands of the three days' campaign which closed the chapter of Elba and opened that of St. Helena, and now, while the sun beat down between the elm trees upon the paved highway on the Namur and Nivelles road, he toiled along under his knapsack, forgetting dust and distance in the memories of the scene around him. All these places, towns, villages and hamlets had had hitherto for him an ideal existence of their own—they had lived in a haze of history, and around their names had shone the glory of battle—and now they were before him, lying under the sunlight, silent in the summer afternoon, without sight or sound save those of rest and husbandry; but still, so incorporated in the ideal of war that the ways of peace seemed to sit strangely upon them. Milestones moss-covered with age, finger-posts bleached by rain and time, might well seem so many headstones and crosses set up to mark that greatest grave-yard of human glory—the campaign ground of 1815—Quatre Bras eight kilometres, Sombreffe four. To Wavre—to Mont St. Jean—to Frasnes—to Fleurus—to Waterloo—to Ligny—such were the names that met his gaze upon the old road posts where paths branched away over great plains of stubble, all quivering in the sun. Midway between Sombreffe and Quatre Bras, and in the neighbourhood of Marbais, a slight elevation flanks the road on the right. From its summit the eye ranges over

a large extent of country, and the smoke of Fleurus, the tall chimneys of Charleroi, and the white houses of Quatre Bras are visible south-east, south and west, but in the opposite direction from Fleurus an object appears upon the north-western horizon which at once centres upon it the gaze of the traveller. It is the upper part of a cone, distant but still distinct against the sky, having on its summit a huge square like block which the eye fails to resolve, but which the memory already knows is the lion of Waterloo. Standing on that elevated ridge near Marbais, the traveller had before him the campaign ground of 1815; he stood not very far removed from the centre of that great square which has for its four corners Ligny, Quatre Bras, Waterloo and Wavre—that square in which Napoleon moved, giant-like and irresistible, while Ney on the left and Grouchy on the right, won Waterloo for Wellington—brought back the Bourbons, and made the rock of St. Helena famous—one at Quatre Bras, the other at Wavre. So thought the traveller, at least, as he sat to rest a while on that elevated spot, while his eye traced the wide landscape from Frasnes to Fleurus; but the five kilometres, which the last road-post marked, had yet to be traversed, Quatre Bras seen, and the question of a night's lodging solved before the sun (which was already beginning to droop towards the west) had reached the horizon—so, with a knapsack, which seemed heavier at every step, the wanderer resumed his road, and did not halt again until the hamlet at the four roads, with

its half-dozen white houses, had been reached, and the last rays of the setting sun were falling athwart the scattered trees of Boissu. He was on the field of Quatre Bras. An undulating plain, unbroken by wall or hedge, lay around him; the stubble was crisp under foot, and in some places corn stacks still stood where the rye had been gathered in—many people would have said there was little to see, and the ploughmen, as they unyoked their teams for the night, thought probably that the strange wayfarer was up to no good at that hour upon their land. But neither was his presence any harm. This Quatre Bras had for him a kind of personal interest, and the contrast between the past and present of a battle field had here even a deeper meaning than had the other fields over which his fancy had led him.

On the 16th of June, 1815, a regiment, worn and tired by three and twenty miles of dusty march, reached the field of Quatre Bras. Boissu had been taken, Brunswick had fallen, and between the lulls of the cannonade came, ever and anon, amongst the wearied squares of British infantry, the fierce rush of the iron horsemen of L'Heretier and Kellerman. The regiment just arrived upon the field, moved through the tall rye to the inner slope of the ridge, which is the last ground wave overlooking at the northern side, the little valley of Gemioncourt—here it halted, having close by the remnants of two other battalions formed into a single square. Presently, from the outer slope of the ridge, a horseman galloped back towards Quatre Bras,

shouting, as he rode, "Prepare for cavalry: they are coming!" The officer who commanded the regiment, thus warned, placed his men in square. At that instant another horseman rode up from a different direction, and halting against the bayonets of the men, he demanded, in a loud voice, what had been done. "I have formed square," replied the Colonel, "to resist cavalry." "There are none coming," answered the first speaker, "deploy into line." He was a prince, and in that day princes, like kings, could do no wrong. So they proceeded to form line just as the wild cannonade from the heights of Frasnes sank suddenly into ominous silence. It was the calm before the tempest. At once the ridge in front grew dark with huge straight-sworded, steel-clad horsemen, and through the tall and tangled rye there swept the 8th Cuirassiers of Kellerman's Division. Before this rush of horses no men in line could stand; from right to left the regiment became a shapeless wreck. The Cuirassiers swept on towards Quatre Bras, bearing with them a single colour; and one hundred and fifty dead and dying men remained amidst the blood-stained corn to attest the impetuosity of French cavalry and the imbecility of a Dutch prince. The man whose steps we have followed from Fleurus, and who now sat in the sunset on the stubble-covered ridge of Gemioncourt, bore, when at home, the same numbers which that regiment had worn in the fight at Quatre Bras. The autumn twilight had begun to fade when the sense of wanting a supper and a bed roused from his dream of

battle the solitary wayfarer. A peasant passing the road answered the inquiries made by him, and, wandering across the fields, he reached the little village of Frasnes, which had begun to close its doors against the night. In this village (the head-quarters of Marshal Ney on the night of the 16th June) he found a homely supper and a bed, which, though small, was white and clean, and cool, after the fiery heat of the long September day. In the room where he slept, St. Donat the Protector against lightning, in a suit of complete armour, looked angrily from an engraving upon the wall; another engraving represented three men struck by lightning while sheltering under a corn-stack, and underneath was written "Genappe, 1844"—these, with the likeness of Leopold, King of the Belgians, and a portrait of the old lady of the house, at a former period of her existence, completed the decorations of the apartment. The Genappe lightning scene was suggestive. It was over this same village of Genappe that "an awfully loud thunder-clap burst forth" as the English army wound its way on the 17th June, 1815, through rain and mud, to the foot of Mont St. Jean. Was Genappe, then, a favourite target for the clouds?

Waterloo from the Southward.

Through Quatre Bras, through Genappe, by Rossomme, by Caillou, along the paved Charleroi and Brussels Road, till the crest of the last ground wave was reached, and from the ridge of La Belle Alliance, under a cloudless sky, a traveller saw the

field of Waterloo. He had reached this ridge from the southward, preferring, in his fancy, to follow the footsteps of the French army, and to see the fields of Ligny and Quatre Bras before venturing on that of Waterloo; neither did he desire to make his entry to the latter place, upon the top of the Brussels coach, in company with that distinguished worthy, the British tourist—a person who invariably signalises his presence in the Belgian capital by making a pic-nic excursion to the field of the mighty dead, and whose chief delight it is to imbibe beer along the roadside, beating time to "Rule Britannia," or whistling "See the conquering hero comes!" as the coach lumbers heavily along through the Forest of Soignies. No, better to come alone, and gaze quietly upon the spot. Sentiment? Perhaps so, call it what you will; but never mind, this man was satisfied with it, and as it was his own, he carried it without a name.

A slope—a valley—a hill—to the left a grove of old trees—in the foreground a whitewashed farm-house with enclosure—a mighty mound with a lion on its summit—ploughmen turning the yellow earth—pigeons skimming over the fields—a faint murmur of leaves—and over all a noon-day sun and a sky without a cloud—a common Flemish land-scape and nothing more—take away the lion mound, and every English shire will furnish you with a better prospect. Yes, with this difference, the slope won't be La Belle Alliance—the farm-house won't be La-Haye Sainte—the trees won't be those of Hougomont—the ridge won't be Mont St.

Jean—the valley won't be the Tomb of the Old Guard. This slope, this valley, and yonder ridge, together make that hinge of history called Waterloo, which has been oiled by so much blood. There is an idea that a battle ridge, to be strong, should be rough and abrupt; it is erroneous, the gradual incline is the really strong position, and the long, gentle slopes, beautiful in peace, become terrible in war, for they are the same which the farmer loves to scatter with grain, and the gunner to scar with grape-shot.

From this ridge of La Belle Alliance, where the wayfarer sat, silently looking at the scene before him, a curious sight had met the glance of the great Emperor, about mid-day, on the 18th June, 1815. Looking towards the right, while all the space in front shook with the thunder of his attack, he noticed upon the heights of St. Lambert motionless objects, which might mean trees, and might mean men; if men, they might be Frenchmen: they were the Prussians. And this was Waterloo—so often thought of by this traveller—pictured—brain-sketched—studied—fancied under every phase of light and shade, until here, at length, under the sunlight, lay stretched the field itself. Yet, perhaps, it was not altogether easy for this wayfarer, looking down upon the field of Waterloo, to realise, to the utmost, the scene that lay before him. True, Hougomont, La-Haye Sainte and La Belle Alliance were there—true, the very turf of the knoll where he sat had been pressed by the hoofs of the Emperor's charger. But what then? Had not all

that been shrouded in a mist of vapour, lit at times by the red glare of battle, and here on this day was the sun blazing down upon the field, and the ploughman turning the yellow earth, as though forty thousand corpses had never strewn yonder valley, as though the yellow earth had never drunk human gore, till its broad face grew crimson, as though the sun itself had never gone down upon a wild scene of slaughter when Divine Right, after three and twenty years of struggle, got its foot just here upon the neck of the Revolution.

In the dim twilight of the past these men of Waterloo loomed like giants, in the full daylight of the present the scene of their exploits seemed dwarfed—so, with a feeling of disappointment, which he strove to hide as though ashamed of its presence, the wanderer rose from the spot, where for some time he had surveyed the scene, and, crossing the valley in the direction of the lion mound, approached the whitewashed building which calls itself Hotel and Musée de Waterloo. As he drew near to this institution, in which human skulls, leg-bones, armour, &c., are separated from the beer department by a narrow passage, he was set upon by the many guides who cluster thickly around the building—old and young proffered their false bullets and falser sentiment, and were as ready to lie to him in English as the next minute they would have lied to French and German in their native tongues. But he was in no humour for listening, and passed on into the house to rest,

until evening had dispersed the visitors, and the field had resumed the quietude of darkness.

When night fell he wandered out again over the field—the visitors had long gone back to Brussels, the lying guides had disappeared. Whither would he go? The trees at Hougomont showed darkly against the western sky, and towards them he directed his footsteps. It was one of those glorious nights so frequent in tropic regions, so seldom seen in Northern climes. The harvest moon rose, blood-coloured, over Wavre—along the southern horizon summer lightnings flashed at intervals from a dense black cloud. The lion mound rose dark and solemn, throwing a vast shadow along the slope of Mont St. Jean. Within the enclosures of Hougomont reigned that silence which the night wind sometimes renders deeper by breaking. The dew lay heavy upon the grass. In little hollows white streaks of vapour clung shroud-like to the ground. Apple-trees, growing at intervals, stood in the open space dimly in the moonlight. The stillness of the night was heard in this enclosure—the uncertainty of moonlight was visible in it—the memory of the dead was felt in it. The wind often sings a requiem, and moonlight is, perhaps, a graveyard's best illuminator. This mighty death-bed—this huge grave seemed at home with the night—day would have profaned it. Light, which makes visible many things, hides more—you may see a house when you cannot behold a star—there is more of the real, less of the ideal, more of earth, less of heaven; and the past which has so

much of night around it, sometimes requires darkness to behold it. Between the orchard and the garden of Hougomont there stands a well-known wall; though high, it is easily crossed, for the rents of cannon shot and the loopholes for musketry are still upon its surface, and although these apertures made it difficult to pass on the day of battle, they make it easy enough now. Although ruined, it cost a great deal in its day, and consumed quantities of that material which men build power, and destroy walls with—blood. Three thousand lives were lost around it. The traveller crossed the wall and stood beneath a grove of high trees, into which the moonlight could not enter. Through the dark branches he could see, in the misty light, an open space which seemed a garden, and further off a ruined building. In this old grove they stored a portion of the harvest which death reaped on the 15th June, 1815, and where the traveller crossed the wall there stood, under the shadow, a square block of masonry which was a tomb. Aloft in the trees, some birds seemed to keep watch over the dead; the sounds of footsteps beneath startled them, and they flew away into the outer light, flapping noisily against the branches.

To the man who, standing under the shadow of these trees at midnight, saw here Hougomont for the first time, it seemed as if night had for ever wrapt its shroud over the ruins and the weed-grown garden. He did not ask himself what this place was like by day. Day would have here been as great an anomaly as a corpse with staring eyes. The

actual gloom of night seemed to stretch forth its phantom hand to grasp the ideal gloom of the vanished past, and where light failed to show more than a mere outline of things, the shadow, and the darkness, and the moonlight, and the night wind revealed strange glimpses of that terrible twilight, when the glare of the burning chateau showed a stiffened corpse or mangled wretch under every hedge and in every hollow. Here, at least, there was no disappointment.

There are times when the mind takes no heed of time and a minute becomes an hour, and an hour a minute. This was such a time. When the traveller emerged again upon the open field, leaving behind him the rustling trees of Hougomont, the moon had risen high in the heavens, and its now yellow light showed distinctly the undulations of the ground—over stubble, where a covey of partridges rose from his feet and vanished into the gloom; through patches of clover which sparkled in the moonlight, the traveller wandered along that valley, which has on one side Mont St. Jean and on the other La Belle Alliance. This valley represents the conventional twelve paces across which the Revolution and Divine Right fought their last gigantic duel. It was into this gloomy arena that Donzelot, Bachelu and Ney led their different columns, and marked the hours of that long summer afternoon by striking ponderous blows upon the iron mass which crested Mont St. Jean, sounding that knell whose echo reached through the trees of Soignies, far beyond Brussels, and

shook the hills from Liege to Ostend. It was on the last spur overlooking this valley, at 7 30 in the evening, that the Emperor took his stand while the Guard, in double column, with Ney and Friant, and Michel, and Poret de Morvan, passed by for its last charge. Four hundred yards behind, the Prussian shot and shell fell fast around La Belle Alliance, and the roar of Blucher's guns from Planc-noit was scarce muffled by the thunder of the closer cannonade which raged around the bronzed battalions. Here was made the last desperate throw of the ruined demi-god; when struck in front, and flank and rear, the vast mass which obeyed him trembled in the twilight. And when that last throw was made, it was from this valley, so quiet now, that the terrible cry of "*Suave qui peut*" went shuddering through a twilight, deepened with gore, to tell Orange and Nassau, and Brunswick and Guelph, and Hapsburg and Romanoff, and Bourbon and Hohenzollern, to rest easy under their crowns that night—that night, almost the first for three and twenty years.

History tells of other battle gloamings, but of none like this one. There is a mournful solemnity, a depth of ruin, a vastness of disaster about it, to which nothing that the world has yet seen can approach. Describe it—futile; paint it—almost impossible. Shadows of cloud mixing with mists of earth—in the west the dull glow of a lurid sun-set—twilight closing over interminable space—half in the shadow, half in the lurid glow, a huge eagle wings his flight into deep obscurity. Such a

weird creation of a painter's fancy the traveller who stood in the valley of Mont St. Jean once saw—apparently a sombre meaningless picture—in reality not so; for in its dim depths there seemed the realisation of a vast sorrow, and a sense of unutterable gloom hung brooding over the canvas. To that picture the twilight of Waterloo had ever borne a strange kinship. There was around it the dull haze of smoke at night, and the red glare of a dying conflagration broke out at intervals through the cloud rifts. The eagle, too, was not wanting; its dusky shadow filled the horizon far away towards Rossomme and Genappe, and Quatre Bras, and further still, where over a stormy ocean there rose against a distant sky, a prison rock which had its base at Waterloo.

Upon the field of Waterloo, at that part of the ridge of Mont St. Jean which formed the right centre of the English army, and in front of the spot where Halkett's brigade was posted, there stands, as everybody is aware, a lofty mound surmounted by a colossal lion.

This mound is a conspicuous object. From afar it indicates the whereabouts of Waterloo, but close at hand it obscures the battle-field. It is a statue too large for the pedestal—it dwarfs Hougomont, La Haye Sainte and the whole ridge of Mont St. Jean. Hills were levelled to build it, and those which were left seemed dwarfed beside it. Guide-books would call it a striking object, and they would be right. It is a monstrously striking object, but, like every monstrosity, it has its use.

"I have been to the grave of Napoleon," said an Englishman to me one day at St. Helena; "I have been to the grave of Napoleon, but I was disappointed; there was really nothing to see there." The mound at Waterloo prevents a similar remark being made upon the field of Waterloo. It fills the pupil of the eye of the tourist; it is something tangible, something real. He can touch it, place his feet upon it, and therefore it appeals to his senses. If he has one regret in the world upon the subject of this monument, it is, perhaps, that he cannot inscribe Smith, Brown, Jones, or Bull with a knife upon it. The mound is an epitome of a certain class, by no means a limited one; it has at the summit a very large and massive lion, at the base a very commodious beer shop. Between these two extremes you may find any amount of enthusiasm of a metal which is essentially Britannic.

Nevertheless, the mound is not altogether useless. There are few better standpoints in the world for looking at the Revolution than this spot, which was so long deemed its tomb. The Tomb of Revolution and the Trophy of Divine Right, the mighty dam which was to chain for ever the waves of Democracy—the grand monument of Kings, with the King of the Forest on its summit, looking towards France, to scare back the French Idea—all this was grand—grand to many more even than the poor Cockney tourist whose brain shadowed forth a faint idea that the whole thing had something to say to "Rule Britannia" and "God Save" and "The British Lion." But all this is changed; the

mound has taught that lesson long enough—it is teaching another lesson now. Waterloo—the Hinge of History—the Avenger of Thrones—the prelude to St. Helena—that is all past. But Waterloo, the forgotten sequel to Crecy or Malplaquet—Waterloo, the Dead Letter of History—defeated by time—that is all present. "Very often," says a great writer, "a battle lost is progress gained." It is true of Waterloo. Won by Monarchy it has been a gain to Revolution. Democracy, running to seed, was clipped at Mont St. Jean, and it has grown strong at the root—Sampson blind, and a prisoner, regains his strength, and is thought a plaything. The Revolution, poor old giant, is also deemed harmless, after Waterloo, and the Kings commence to play with it. It is a dangerous game, and Gaza should have warned the Tuileries.

If any person wishes to see aright the Lion Mound at Waterloo, let him, in the early morning, when the sun is low over Wavre, and the mists hang heavy around the trees of Hougomont—when the British tourist is still far away in Brussels and the lying guides are asleep after the night's debauch—when the lark is out over the field, and, if it is spring time, the daw is busy at the nest, which, as if in mockery of man, he builds yearly under the lion's paw—let him then go up the granite steps of the mound, or, better still, ascend from the side of Hougomont or La Belle Alliance, by the steep bank of earth itself. The rain-marks will give him footing, the stunted bushes will assist him, and

from the summit a view far-reaching over the great plains of Flanders will burst upon his sight.

If possible, let this man, whoever he may be, take with him that "Element of well-being"—Individuality—and let him leave in the Musée at the base any fine ideas about the British Lion and Rule Britannia which he may have heretofore entertained. It is just possible that he will also have to abandon the old definition of duty, which, in that tight island of ours, we so frequently indulge in.

If we go to war with the Chinese because they don't want to get drunk upon our opium—if we annex half Asia, clear the Maori from New Zealand, or knock Prince Satsuma's city into ruins, "Duty" will be sure to figure somewhere in the performance.

"England expects every man to do his duty," said Nelson, on that famous day when he bore down upon the fleets of France and Spain. What was that duty? "To hate a Frenchman as you would the devil." 'Twas our duty to put one Ferdinand in Spain and another Ferdinand in Naples, to suppress the Revolution, and to make this fair land of Flanders, which has France written in every town, village and homestead, a border province for the Dutchman.

The fact is, we like to make show of a sort of principle whenever we fight for interest. Glory won't do, for the French fly that flag; so we run up our big bunting, labelled "Duty," and, like Charity, it covereth a multitude of sins. Well,

never mind about that; right or wrong, we did suppress this Revolution.

Oh! yes, we did. We put a son of St. Louis back into the Tuileries; we parcelled Italy into twenty States, and we played the devil with the Rhine—and then we killed the Revolution at Waterloo, and buried it in the grave under the willow-tree at St. Helena—at least, we thought we did. But, somehow or other, there came three days' scuffling, we can hardly call it fighting, in the streets of Paris, and lo! the dead Revolution stirred and breathed, and thrones trembled, and kings grew pale, and Waterloo became history.

Hark! even now this undoing of Waterloo is abroad. Universal Suffrage—Reform—Civil and Religious Freedom — Education. In London, Rome or Madrid—under different names, but still the same unconquerable, never-dying Revolution.

Many hands are against it—the soldier shoots it—the rich bribe it—the judge condemns it—but still it lives, spreads and multiplies. Seventy years ago it was France—now it is Europe, and the day approaches when it must be the world.

We will close with an extract—one discovered by accident—and singular, by reason of a strange coincidence.

On the 3rd of June, 1826, a man visited the field of Waterloo, and in a visitor's book, which at that time was kept in the farm-house of La Belle Alliance, he wrote the following:—

"I this day visited the field of Waterloo, where Napoleon, by the misconduct of an officer, was

obliged to yield the palm of victory to superior numbers, and that his son may one day avenge his death and shake Europe to its centre is the wish of a sincere American."

The man who wrote the above signed himself "Junius Brutus Booth, Citizen of the United States." Thirty-nine years later his son fired a pistol-shot in a theatre in Washington, and a continent was shaken to its centre.

There is a strange equality in war. That bit of lead we call a bullet is a sad leveller; it knows no distinction between peer and peasant, but is the same grim life-taker to either. Brunswick goes down before it at Quatre Bras—Turenne at Sasbach—Moore at Corunna—Berwick at Philipsburg—Charles at Frederickshuld—Sydney at Zutphen as easily as any poor conscript from the Rhineland.

Nowhere does any man pay the penalty of life so readily as on the battle field. Nay, there that penalty seems even to wear a strange charm of its own.

Death is abroad and men go to meet him—smoke hides his fleshless arms—roar of cannon deadens his hoarse rattle—the strong fall before him, not the weak—the sword and not the sheet is in his victim's grasp—men run not from but to him, and his sight makes bolder instead of terrifying. Then comes the morrow—the trench dug, perhaps, for the cannon holds the dead; all alike, too, for the battle's graveyard knows no pauper's corner.

Far away in dim cathedrals, and amidst the hum of cities, they build, perchance, great monuments

to soldier-princes, but the proudest grave that earth can give to soldier-prince or soldier-private is the grave beneath the turf whereon he fell. The plough may turn the sod above it, the grain may grow and ripen, the lark sing, the reaper, in summer, work his sickle, and the winter snow lie deep upon it—what of all that? These men did their work and went to sleep at tattoo of the battle-drum, nor will they wake until the last great trumpet is sounding forth its vast *réveillée*.

[NOTE.—Reading this paper now, when nearly forty-five years have passed since it was written, I cannot find much in its meaning that I would wish to alter.

I have never been able to separate Napoleon from the Revolution. He was the Revolution systematised, regulated and reduced to law and order. There can be no better means, I think, of judging the full and completed value of the Revolution to the world than by examining the conditions, mental, moral, economic, and social, of the nations and peoples of the Continent of Europe, to whom the principles of the French Revolution were carried by the arms of Napoleon, and those other nations and peoples to whom these principles were denied through the fortune of war.

Compare the state of Russia, Turkey, Spain and Portugal with that of Germany, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Italy, and the countries of the Danube. In the former, Napoleon was not able to consolidate his conquests and set the seed of his

laws and government firmly in the soil. In the latter the peoples were able to understand his system; they had time to learn the benefits of his civil code. When the conqueror fell they could not go back to the old barbarisms of their previous lives. These nations are to-day fully a century ahead of those who, chiefly through the assistance of the arms and the wealth of England, were enabled to resist the power of Napoleon and to repel the mental emancipation of the French Idea.]

At Mungret

1907

When your Rector was kind enough to ask me to visit Mungret he added to his invitation the hope that I would say a few words to the students during my visit. I will tell you frankly that the supplementary request was the alloy which all human happiness is said of necessity to contain, and this feeling arose not only because I am not a speaker by profession or inclination, but also, and perhaps in a greater degree, because I should have to select some subject for speaking to you which should combine in itself two things. First, it should bear some practical application to the thought or prospective lives of my hearers; and, second, I should myself know something about it.

Now, what did I know that would be of practical interest to you in your future lives? A little, perhaps, of many things; but not much of any one thing. A man whose profession has led him to walk the world for something like fifty years must of necessity (unless he had kept his eyes resolutely closed along the road) have seen many curious things, and met many strange persons; but that sort of scrappy knowledge—if, indeed, it be

knowledge—is not of much use for crystallising into any set subject for speech, apt to grow discoursive when put into words, to soothe towards sleep rather than to interest and enliven. But as I thought over the difficulty before me I found one subject that had much in common to you and to me.

Many among you are future missionaries—recruits in the army which has to carry the cross into places that are still remote from civilisation. I had met in various outlying parts of the world many missionary priests of various nationalities labouring among a still greater variety of races and colours. So, if you will allow me I shall endeavour to say something about missionaries whom I have met, and scenes in which they laboured.

Burmah was the first field in which I had any knowledge of missionary labours—then came Canada and the North-West, then West Africa, then South Africa, and, lastly, the Soudan.

In the first-named country the pioneers of Christianity had been French. French missionaries had penetrated into all parts of the country, and one of them in particular had so identified himself with the people of the land that his name still stands as that of a foremost authority upon the history, manners, and philosophy of the Burmese people.

Bishop Brigandet was still a living power in the missionary life of "India beyond the Ganges," as it used to be called, when I first went there fifty years ago. The secret of his success was the old one, which has always been and always will be the

secret of all successful missionary effort—devotion to, and sympathy with, the people among whom he has come. Bishop Brigandet threw himself heart and soul, body and brains, into his work. He mastered the difficult language, studied its philosophy, knew the mind and the habits of the people, listened to their stories, was kind to them in their misfortunes, tended them in sickness—identified himself with the whole circle of their lives.

That is a power, the secret of which, so far as I have been able to judge, is a gift almost wholly peculiar to the French race, and I think it may be fairly said that no other race has been so successful in the field of modern Christian missionary effort.

My next experience of the labours of missionaries was in the Canadian North-West, and there, again, the labourers were French or French Canadians. At the time I speak of—nearly forty years ago—the enormous territory lying between the Rocky Mountains and Hudson's Bay—the region drained by the Saskatchewan, the Athabasca, the Peace, and the Mackenzie Rivers—was all a wilderness of prairie, forest, lake, and granite waste. Much of it is still in that wild state, but the prairie portion—that lying between the American boundary line and the sub-arctic forest, has now become the seat of numerous settlements. Railways traverse it, and cities and towns have sprung up in places where forty years ago the buffalo roamed in vast herds over an undivided realm of grass. At that time the red man was a notable denizen of those wastes. He

lived on the buffalo, and his camps moved as the herds moved. The Indians were divided into as many tribes as there are nations in Europe. There were Crees and Blackfeet, Assinebonies, Sioux, Beaver Indians, Chepweyans, Salteaux, as in the earlier days of European colonisation in America there had been Mohawks, Iroquois, Delawares, Hurons, and Mohigans.

Among these prairie and forest tribes of the North-West the French and French-Canadian missionaries went out. Nothing stayed the steps of these dauntless men, just as Marguette and La Salle and Hennipin, and countless other pilgrims had pushed out far ahead of the fur trader and the settler into the regions which are now known to us as Kansas and Nebraska, Missouri and Dakota, so Grandet and Taché and La Combe had gone forth into the wilderness, labouring to bring the light of Christian faith and Christian hope to these wild races of the Saskatchewan.

In the winter of the year 1870 I met at the Rocky Mountain House—a post of the Hudson's Bay Company—Pere La Combe. He had lived with the Blackfeet and Cree Indians for many years, and I enjoyed, more than I can say, listening to his stories of adventure with these wild men of the plains. The thing that left the most lasting impression on my mind was his intense love and devotion to these poor wandering and warring people—his entire sympathy for them. He had literally lived with them, sharing their food and their fortunes and the everlasting dangers of their lives. He

watched and tended their sick, buried their dead, and healed the wounded in their battles. No other man but Father La Combe could pass from one hostile camp, or tribe, to another—suspected nowhere, welcome everywhere; carrying as it were the "truce of God" with him wherever he went.

That is a long while ago, and Pere La Combe has probably gone to his reward; but, if that is so, many a poor wild thief of the wilderness, thinking of his teaching, may well have repeated in some strange fashion of speech or thought—"Remember me when thou shalt come into thy kingdom." *

My next experience of missionary work was in a very different field—the West Coast of Africa. There the deadly climate had beaten back the teachers, and their graves were almost the only momentoes of their presence. My duties required that I should travel extensively through the forest. I had as a servant a very intelligent and trustworthy man of the Fantee nation, who had been educated in a Wesleyan missionary school. Of course, I suffered from the fever. That is a rule on the West Coast that knows very rare exception. My servant, "Thursday" by pagan name, but Dawson after a missionary teacher, had had a large experience in this matter of fever, and his suggestions to me when the attacks came were many and curious. The after-part of the attack was almost worse than the full force of the disease. One had a positive loathing for food in any form.

It was at this stage that Dawson's experience prompted him to intervene. "Would master try

* He is still living.

some snail soup?" The Rev. Jones, whom he formerly served, had found the soup or broth made from snails a good restorative in the prostrate condition which followed the fever fits. This soup was made from the glutinous bodies of very large snails which were to be found in the dense growths of the tropic forest. The idea of eating those great crawling globules would have been repugnant in the rudest state of health, but when the whole interior man, or what was left of it, was in a state of passive resistance to any form of food, the suggestion to eat snails was too horrible. "Well, Dawson," I would say, to change the conversation, "tell me what happened to the Rev. Jones?" "The Rev. Jones; he die at Doonguah, Sa." After another attack Dawson would quote his treatment of the Rev. Smith. "And what happened to the Rev. Smith?" I would enquire. "He Sa; he die at Mansu." Later on the name of the Rev. Brown would come up as another evidence in favour of snail soup. "Tell me about the Rev. Brown," I would say, with increasing feebleness of utterance, and, I may say, of decreasing hope in that reverend gentleman's eventual escape from West Coast environment. "The Rev. Brown die at Accra, Sa," Dawson would solemnly declare. But nothing appeared to shake his faith in the efficacy of his recipe.

A gleam of the grim humour of the situation would sometimes strike one. "Tell me, Dawson," I once said to this sable consoler of many weary hours, "tell me the name of some unfortunate fever-

stricken patient of yours who did manage to drag his skeleton out of this horrible coast. Was there anyone among these reverend gentlemen who got away?" Dawson thought for a moment. "The Rev. Robinson," he said. "He left the coast at Accra." Then, recollecting himself, he added, "I heard afterwards he die at Madeira, Sa."

Often when lying awake in some miserable forest croom, the sounds of rich lip-suction from the yard outside would strike my ear, as my carriers, and Dawson among them, drew in the thick gelatinous soup from the large pot in which the day's harvest of snails, gathered during our march, from the leaves bordering our track, had been boiled.

On one occasion I was persuaded to taste the luscious-looking compound. It was not unlike turtle soup, but I never repeated the experiment.

My next experience of missionaries was gained in the Soudan. There the work of Catholic missionary enterprise had fallen into the hands of Austrian priests. After the unsuccessful attempt to save Gordon and Khartoum in the autumn and winter of 1884-5, I was left in charge of the frontier at Wadi Halfa. Our outposts extended for more than one hundred miles south of that place, between the Second and the Third Nile cataracts. By the desert route Khartoum was about five hundred miles distant, and the greater part of the intervening desert was roamed over by the Kabbabish tribe—a race of Arabs—rovers, robbers, and slave-dealers, whose wanderings led them from Dongola to Darfour.

It was determined to attempt the release of some at least among the missionary priests who were held captive by the Mahdi near Khartoum, through the agency, and with the assistance, of this Arab tribe. I offered a reward of two hundred pounds for every priest or nun who would be brought in safety to our outposts. Several months passed. At last one morning a small group of camels and men was seen on the desert shore opposite our post at Akasha, half-way between Wadi Halfa and Dongola. A boat sent to the further bank soon brought the party to our camp. It was composed of a Kabbabish Arab Sheik, his attendant, a German priest, an Italian nun, a negro lay sister, and a Greek merchant refugee. This party had ridden from Khartoum to the Wady-el-Kab in six days and nights—four hundred miles. Resting there for two days, they had ridden the remaining two hundred miles in four days.

The priest and the nun were burnt by the desert sun dark as Arabs. They were blistered by sun and wind, and were terribly fatigued —the nun, a fragile looking lady, in particular. I had tents pitched for them under some palm trees by the river, and after three or four days' rest and food they were able to relate their adventures in detail.

The Kabbabish Sheik had proceeded to carry out his mission with the greatest prudence and circumspection. He had gone to Omdurman with a small convoy of good camels, carrying the dates of Mahass to sell in the markets of Khartoum. In all its length the Nile produces no dates so sweet

as those of Dar Mahass, between the Second and Third cataracts.

To avoid suspicion, the Arab had proceeded very leisurely with the sale of his cargo—sitting day after day in the market-place until every detail of that place was known to him, and the merchants, the buyers, and the sellers were his acquaintances or customers. Among the crowd in the market-place came the priests and even the nuns. Islam is still the widest democracy in the world—the floor of the Mosque is free to pasha and people. It is only in modern Christendom that the pew is privileged. The prisoners of the Madhi were free to exchange salutations in the market-place with the Mahdi himself.

Thus it came about that the Kabbabish Arab was able, in the course of a couple of months, to establish intercourse over his baskets of dates with the people he had come to rescue. After many meetings of this sort it became possible to broach the question of escape, and at last it was arranged that the Sheik would be at a given spot with the camels one evening after dark. To this spot the priest, the nun, and the negro lay sister were to come, ready for the long journey.

Everything went well. The three fugitives got unperceived to the trysting-place. The Sheik and his boy were there. Six or seven camels were lying in a hollow close by, saddled and ready, and soon the dusky string—the boy leading, the Sheik the last of the file—was treading a rapid way through the Mimosa bush fringe towards where the outer desert, grey and vast, lay beyond it.

The little party rode all that night and all the next day, and well into the next night. Then there was a halt to feed, change camels, and then on for another long spell of another twelve or fourteen hours, at the same rapid trotting pace. By the time this last ride was accomplished, the chance of successful pursuit had become remote, and an easier rate of movement was followed. So, on the sixth evening, the Wady-el-Kab was gained. Here there was a halt of two or three days. One night, when the party was lying under the Beduin tent, the Austrian priest heard the Sheik's wife urging him in low tones not to go on any further with the prisoners, but to stay where he was, keeping the refugees as slaves. "Do not trust yourself with the English," she said, "they will take these people from you, and will not give you any of the money they promised you. You will have had all your journey and trouble for nothing. Stay where you are and keep what you have got."

He did not listen to the counsel of his bosom's partner, but came on as I have said to our outposts. When he reached Wadi Halfa he looked the living picture of a perfect child of the desert—lean and lithe, tall, and of faultless figure, with the eye of a hawk, and that air of inborn breeding which only belongs to the Arab man and horse in the world.

I handed over to him the day after his arrival the four hundred pounds I had promised him—all in gold. When I lifted up the bottom of the bag, and the four hundred golden sovereigns rolled in a heap

on the deck of the Nile boat in which I lived, he and his friend were able to restrain any exclamation of surprise, and only a deep-drawn respiration betrayed astonishment at the sight of gold such as their wildest dreams had never imagined.

The sequel to this story is worth relating. Some six months later a large party of Kabbabish Arabs came in from the desert to Wadi Halfa, bringing with them a number of slaves. Among the Arabs I noticed a fat, apoplectic-looking man, whose face, I thought, was familiar to me. It was the Arab Sheik of the rescue party. His good looks were almost gone. His clean, lithe figure had grown puffed and unwholesome-looking. He seemed to be aware of the change in his personal appearance, for he kept somewhat back among the crowd. The opportunity was too good to be lost, so calling him to the front, I said to the party :— "See the effects of riches suddenly acquired. A little while ago our friend here was a slight and very handsome man. Behold the change that gold has made in him."

But we are forgetting our missionaries, and I must bring these rambling recollections to a close.

The true missionary is the finest soldier now left in the world. It may, indeed, be said of him at his best, that he was the best soldier ever seen on earth. And let me tell you, young missionaries, that the secret of his success and of his good soldiership has been poverty. I have seen something of men in their various sorts and conditions, and I say from

that experience that the poor man, provided he has a stout heart and a strong or active body, will go farther than the rich man. The feats that our geographical explorers are so proud to perform, and for the performance of which they are feasted and rewarded by Governments and learned societies year after year, were performed in thousands of cases without notice or reward by poor pilgrims, Christian and Mahomedan, in Asia and Africa. I met at Bethlehem a Russian pilgrim who had walked from Eastern Siberia to Palestine, taking two years on the journey. I met on the Upper Nile three young Mahomedan pilgrims making their way to Mecca from the Atlantic shores of Africa.

It is in these cases that human nature is seen at its best on both sides—that of the pilgrim and that of the public. No hand is raised against those travel-stained footmen. They find friends everywhere. And it has always been thus.

In that delightful book, "The Chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond," we see in what manner of poverty Irish pilgrims successfully traversed Europe in the twelfth century, when all the routes were beset with dangers, and the great Church schism of that time had rent Western Europe in twain.

"I traversed Italy," wrote Monk Samson, "at the time when all clerks bearing letters of Pope Alexander were seized, some of them being imprisoned, and others hanged, and others, after having their noses and lips cut off, were sent back

to the Pope, to his shame and confusion. I pretended that I was a Scot (Irish). . . . I acted thus so that I might conceal my purpose, and as a Scot might safely reach Rome." The part he played, and played well (for he, too, was carrying letters to Pope Alexander), was that of a poor Irish pilgrim with staff and cup, begging his way as he went. So far as I have been able to trace the inner stream of history, the Church has always suffered from riches, and has always thriven upon poverty. I do not believe that Henry the Eighth would ever have succeeded in robbing England of her faith if he had not been able to fling the plunder of the rich monasteries to the ravening wolves of his Court and Parliament

You know that one of the oldest books—certainly the oldest Christian work—we possess in Ireland is known as "The Confession of St. Patrick," a work the authenticity and genuine character of which is admitted by almost all the learned of Europe.

In the twenty-first and twenty-second paragraphs of the "Confession" St. Patrick gives us the key to the secret of his extraordinary success as a missionary in Ireland—the most marvellous triumph of one man, all things considered, ever gained by any soldier of the cross on earth. "For though unskilled in all things," he writes, "yet I have endeavoured in some ways to serve even my Christian brethren and the virgins of Christ, and religious women who have given to me small voluntary gifts, and have cast off some of their ornaments upon the altar, and I returned these to them

although they were offended with me because I did so; but I did it for the hope of eternal life, in order to keep myself prudently in every thing, so that the unbelieving might not catch me on any pretext, or in respect to my ministering service, even in the smallest point, I might give the unbelievers an occasion to defame or depreciate it. But perhaps since I have baptised so many thousand men I may have accepted half a scrapull from some of them. Tell it to me and I will restore it to you. Or, when the Lord ordained everywhere clergy through my humble ministry, I dispensed the rite gratuitously. If I asked of any of them even the price of my shoe tell it against me and I will restore you more. I spent (myself) for you that they might receive me: and among you and everywhere I travelled for your sake amid many perils and even in remote places where there was no one beyond, and where no one else had ever penetrated to baptise or ordain clergy, or to confirm the people. . . . I know that poverty and calamity suit me better than riches and luxuries."

In these words—and there are many others of similar import in the "Confession"—we have the whole sum and substance, the cause and the explanation, of St. Patrick's power over the pagan people of Ireland—a power so surpassing all other precedent in missionary success, that after ages, when riches had accumulated in the hands of the clergy, could only find cause for it in ascribing to St. Patrick a vast mass of miraculous legendary doings, many of which are puerile and even

ridiculous in their character. Faith, Hope, and Charity working through poverty and renunciation—these made pagan Ireland in the lifetime of one man the brightest Christian light then shining in the world.

But, reverend fathers and students, it seems presumptious to me that I should be speaking to you at all upon the subject of missionary labours in distant places. You are members of the most illustrious body of missionary priests that the modern world has known. Into what part of the world have not your brethren penetrated? Members of your order traversed Africa from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic—saw the Mountains of the Moon and discovered the great lakes of the central Continent two centuries before Livingstone or Stanley were born. Other Jesuit fathers have penetrated into remotest China, entered Tibet, and traversed India and Japan, crossed the Continent of South America ere ever a Tudor or Stuart monarch had thought of founding a trading station in the Indies, East or West. And the spirit of devotion is still strong in your ranks. We have here this evening a veteran missionary of the Crimean War, whose devotion to the sick and wounded soldiers in the hospitals on the Bosphorus soothed the last moments of many hundred poor soldiers in the terrible winter of 1854-5; and it is, I believe, to his missionary efforts in America, undertaken at a later period, that the erection and completion of this splendid college at Mungret is due. To him in particular it is right

that I should apologise for speaking upon subjects in which he has been himself an actor of so much excellence.

Those words referred to the Revd. W. Ronan, S.J., who proceeded to the Crimea with several Sisters of Mercy in 1854. Speaking to me of his experiences in the hospitals at Scutari, on the afternoon of the evening of my visit to Mungret, he used words to which his death, a few hours later, was destined to give a strangely pathetic interest. He said, "during my time in the hospitals at least twelve hundred soldiers must have received at my hands the last rites of the Church. Some of these poor fellows were strangers to prayer. All that I could do for them was to ask them to repeat after me an invocation to God, an ejaculatory prayer for His mercy ere they passed away. Others had time for longer preparation, and others again had been taught the precepts and prayers of the Church, but, of each and all alike, I have never doubted for an instant that they went straight to Heaven, and when I die," he added, smiling, "I believe they will come to meet me at the gates; they will elect me their Colonel, and I shall stand at their head. I pray daily," he added, "that if God has nothing more for me to do on earth He will take me to Himself."

Just twenty four hours later this venerable soldier of God fell dead as he was leaving the oratory of the College.

At Waterford.

1908

It is customary, I believe, when a man presents prizes to students, that he should say something to them upon matters either connected with the particular form of education for which the awards are given, or upon the question of education in its general trend and bearing. In one respect at least I fear that I labour under some disadvantage, for I have never been technically educated in anything. In my early days technical education, as it has come to be taught and understood, did not exist. The father or the master taught the child or the apprentice the art or the craft he had himself learned from his father or master—thus the chain of art-learning or craft-teaching was continued through the generations.

There are many parts of the world where that old system still survives, in the East especially, but the West has largely, if not wholly, given it up. I think our endeavour should be to see where this habit of education is leading; how it affects our progress as a people; whether there may be growing up in it a weed or a tare, or whether there be any points upon which a recurrence to older forms

of training and instruction might not be useful to us, beginning the enquiry with the art or craft of the home in distinction to the art and craft of the school.

Well, the first art and craft of the home is, I think, the difficult habit of getting up early in the morning, winter and summer—week in and week out. Half the battle of the day depends upon that first onslaught upon idleness, which, after a little practice, becomes easier of accomplishment. The next home art is cleanliness—that is a water jump on the course—and the third and final fence is food.

I am in this short catalogue only dealing with mundane matters, but of the spiritual world I would say that the boy or girl who will attend diligently to the three home crafts I have named will go a long way to the attainment of that other supreme practice of home life—prayer.

Here, then, in these three things—early rising, cleanliness, and food—you have the foundations laid upon which to build all the arts and crafts of life. Let us examine this position for a moment, and first for early rising. How much success in life depends upon that habit I will give you an example of.

There was a great general in America fifty years ago. All things considered, he was the greatest among the great men that America produced in her Civil War. His name was Stonewall Jackson. The biographer and friend of that great man has told us that if the name of any officer was brought before his general for employment there was one

question invariably asked by him—"Can he get up an hour before the daylight every morning?" If the applicant could not perform that one feat, and do it with alacrity, then the possession of all the technicalities of the military profession was not sufficient to make Stonewall Jackson employ him.

I have mentioned food as the third point in my programme, and what I mean by food is this, that every boy and girl in the land ought to be trained in the art of preparing and cooking their own foods, on the fire which they had learned to set and light. Now, I have no doubt that these things appear very simple matters to you, almost child-like, and, perhaps, altogether beneath the notice of sensible, grown-up persons. I dare say that I thought so once myself, but I had the good fortune in life to find myself at times in places where food was only to be had by getting up very early in the morning, and where, whether it was plentiful or scarce, one had to know how to make a fire and cook a breakfast or a dinner before you could eat it.

It was in that school—the cold, hard school of the wilderness—that the secret of what food and fire really meant in the philosophy of life first came to me, and I saw that you must begin with them before you could do anything else in the world. I came also to see that God's first order to man really rested upon these few simple facts of fire and food; that the beasts and the birds, though they had to get up early for their food, had not to cook it, and that therein lay the difference between God's law for the beast and His law for man; and from the

fact of that difference I saw springing all the order and the labour and the natural civilisation of man in the world.

There came in the great command, "By the sweat of thy brow thou shalt earn thy bread." Bread, not grass nor nuts; and I saw, too, that wherever man had attempted to escape from, or to ignore that supreme order—which so far from being a punishment is the greatest blessing given to man—wherever, I say, man has tried to evade that command, there you will find penury and hunger and degradation and unthrift and uncleanliness and drunkenness and bad living and ill-health; and wherever man has diligently obeyed that law there you will find order and neatness and plenty and right living, and real Christian faith and morals.

Thus it is that I look to the home for the first teaching of these sovereign and everlasting truths, and that I look to the school for their further inculcation and practice.

When I hear and read, as one must to-day, of Primary Education, and Secondary Education, and Intermediate Education and Denominational Education, I sometimes think of the words of an old priest who lived in this or in a neighbouring diocese forty or fifty years ago—a big man who, in a straight and simple way, saw far and deep into the world's bed-rock facts.

I remember a speech made by him—at Dungarvan I think it was—in which he told his hearers that he had no faith in long words of four or five or

six syllables, such as those long educational terms, as a means by which we might hope to keep our people at home in Ireland, and prevent them leaving our shores in the emigrant vessels of that day, but that he did believe in some of the short words, in the old ideas for that purpose, and I remember the words in which he concluded his harangue as though he had been addressing a crowd of emigrants on the deck of a vessel about to sail from Cork or Waterford. "Come back to us," he cried in tones of irony and indignation, "come back to us and we will give you plenty of National Education, we will give you even Denominational Education, and if these things do not fill your bellies they will certainly fill your mouths."

Well, if I thought that old priest's words strange at the time they were uttered, I have long ago come to see that Solomon, in all his wisdom, could not have spoken wiser words, for that food fact is the chief, if, indeed, it is not the only factor, in the emigration problem, and it can only be dealt with by industry, and industry can only be reached by teaching and example—by getting up early, and by the habit of work taught to the child, and even forced upon the attention of the child from an early age; and the lesson to be taught is really a simple one—that the hearth should be swept, and the table kept clean, and the windows opened, and the mud taken from the door-step, and the breakfast got ready for the breadwinner—and, above all, that the work should be done well, and with a will, not for the sake of the reward that might be in it, or

later on in life, of the hire it may earn, but for the blessing that it must earn.

I know nothing so heartbreaking in Ireland to-day as the waste which one is compelled to witness on so many sides; waste of crops and pasture, waste of wood and weed, waste through briar, nettle and thistle, waste through bog and mountain, waste of farm implements left out to rust in the rains of winter—all over the land.

One thing I do not see wasted—it is drink. I often come upon the butt of a haycock rotting in a field, but I have never heard that anybody found anything in the bottom of a discarded whiskey bottle.

I travel about a good deal, and often get strange sidelights on men and things. I met a man the other day on his way to a fair. "How is the price of stock?" I asked. "High," he answered. "That ought to bring money into the country," I said. "There's no money in the country," he replied; "it runs out as quick as it comes in." "Porter," I said, enquiringly. "Yes," he answered, "and divershun and women's hats. Look here," he went on, pointing his stick to Galtee More, which was out in his morning majesty, clear of cloud, "if you were to put a publichouse on top of that mountain to-morrow there would be a road up to it the day after." Ah, my lord, if we could only get as much public spirit into the land as we have publichouse spirit in it I believe we would be the most prosperous people in the wide world.

I have spoken of the weeds which now form so

conspicuous a feature in our pastoral landscape. A friend lately told me that he had been informed that a tall yellow weed which bears the Irish name of "Boukawn," was of positive benefit to the land, because it shaded the grass in summer from the powerful rays of the sun. I was not aware before that our Irish summers were of a tropical nature.

I once had the pleasure, in a distant country, of meeting a gentleman of considerable reputation in the science of astronomy. I asked him to tell me the most striking fact he had discovered in the planatary and starry depths of immeasurable distance. "The law of order," he replied, "the reign of absolute precision; the law of regularity, which is almost as striking in the domain of the infinitely little as in that of the endless immense.

And if this be so, and we know it to be true as much from the discoveries under the microscope as in those through the telescope, is it possible that man is to be the sole exception to the universal law of the Creator, and that he, in this land or anywhere else, is to strike out a new line for himself in disorder or mismanagement or neglect?

I saw not long ago, and the spectacle may still be visible for aught I know, a strange sight close to a public highway. It was two successive harvests of hay standing in a large field—the hay of 1907 had not been removed, and the hay of 1908 had grown up around the old rain-blackened hay-cocks. The new cocks were made close to the old ones, and both were standing together in that field, which was one of great natural richness.

That, of course, was a very exceptional case, but all the same it was a sickening spectacle to look upon in the beginning of the 20th century; for what a delight it is to see on this earth of ours a well-tilled and tended farm, and a really neat and comfortable farm-house. I do not know of any spectacle in the wild range of the world which carries to the mind of the beholder a livelier sense of satisfaction. It is a little bit of Eden put back upon the earth again. It is more; it is Labour's thanks-offering to the Creator of the world.

I remember when a boy often hearing the cheery salutation which used to be given to labourers in the harvests field, or the meadow, as we drove along the roads, "God bless the work, men!" I never hear it now. Has the idea of God's blessing upon man's work gone wholly from our land? It is not the question of who is the actual possessor of the land that is of the first importance to a nation. It is its cultivation. Are you, as a nation, making the most of your land? That is the real question.

A lady who had recently travelled from the North of France to the South said to me a few days ago, "I did not see a weed from Calais to Bayonne." I thought of the "Boukawn" and of my farmer friend who considered it as a parasol to shade the grass from the sun.

Not long since I was staying at a delightful spot on the West Coast of Mayo. We took a stroll one day from the hotel by the railway station to the adjoining village. On the railway platform there stood large cases labelled, "Hog produce from

Chicago." In the village we bought some wool marked "British Manufacture," and coming back to the hotel we passed a horse eating foreign grain, with its head in a bag marked "Made in Austria."

If you visit our island villages you will find the same economical conditions prevailing. Onions from Brittany, bacon from America, oatmeal from Canada. And around these villages you will see land on every side equal, if not superior, to that of any country in the world for the production of these commodities.

I was passing the other day the ruined Abbey of Athassel, once the largest in this island, and one of the richest in the Western World. It is still in its ruin and desolation a most striking object. On the gable of a neighbouring house the effigy of a very stylishly dressed young woman in an enormous hat and feathers was posted up, while underneath the life-sized portrait was written: "Try our Frenchy Fashions."

Now, it seems to me, as I looked from the ruined abbey to this lady of fashion, that I had before me two remarkable pictures of ancient and modern technical education.

There on one side was the highest form of art ever reached by man in the world—Architecture. How eloquent were those mute stones! those glorious groined arches! those finely-chiselled, but now grass-grown, cloisters, even in the maze of their ruin, after seven hundred years of time.

And the other picture! the lady in the "Directoire" skirt and the hat with the Flamingo feathers.

What did she represent? Well, I suppose she represented education and enterprise in the 20th century.

Then a thought struck me. It was this. Why, if we are to imitate French fashions in dress and head-dress, should we not introduce also something of French thrift, of the business capacity of the French women, and of that admirable knowledge of the preparation of food which they all possess? We should not be content with the feathers of the bird only in the matter of fashion.

The bird himself might be thought of in relation to its place in a fricassee, and I feel confident, from what I know of the male sex generally, that a knowledge of how to truss a fowl, as well as to trim a hat, will not prove any barrier against matrimonial solicitation or contentment.

Let us ask ourselves a question. What is the sum and essence of the thing we call technical training? It is the art and practice of changing the raw material into something else. It is making a chair or a table out of a log of wood, making clay into jars and cups and saucers, turning iron and steel into gates and grates, into knives and forks.

Still, with all man's turning and twisting of things into other things he has never beaten the technical capacity of the milch cow, for she can turn grass and clover into milk and butter.

Now, the nations that have trained themselves to do all these technical things well are self-supporting, strong and reliant nations, and the people that do them ill, or do not do them at all, are more or

less helpless, dependent upon others for their comfort, and even for their health and wealth. In a word, technical work is the finishing of things.

What do we finish in Ireland? The wharves of our seaport cities will answer. On these wharves you will see vast piles of magnificent timber leaving the country to be made by other hands in other lands into flooring and furniture, and fifty other uses. You will see vast numbers of cattle going away. Not fat cattle, but for the most part unfinished stores, to be made into food by other people.

All these things are to be worked up, technically worked up, elsewhere.

A friend of mine was visiting a large bacon factory in Wiltshire not long ago. The manager said to him, "You are a strange people in Ireland. We get most of our pigs from you. We manufacture them into Wiltshire bacon, and send back to you the heads and feet; the bodies we keep for ourselves."

Yet we can find ample energy in some directions. I opened a leading newspaper the other day, and I counted fifteen columns in it devoted to the business of racing, betting, and boxing, and two columns given to markets, farming, crops, and to the industries of Ireland generally. If I had been an Irish race-horse owner I might have possibly thought the division of space fair, but being only an Irishman I was disposed to regard it as a little one-sided.

You will think, perhaps, that in these few re-

marks I have laid undue stress upon the straws on the surface of life here. Well, for my part, I think that there is not the slightest necessity for any deep or prolonged study of the Irish problem, no necessity for reading books and listening to lectures upon it in order to discover the secrets of the economic condition of things in Ireland. They seem to me to be clear and distinct on the surface. The book is open on the railway platform, in the village street, in the field, and by the roadside.

I do not think we can ever become, and I do not wish that we should ever become, a manufacturing nation, such as England and other countries in which the coal measures have been retained, have become. I should be sorry to see our pure air blurred, and our beautiful landscapes blotted by the fume of factories and smoke of huge cities.

You are aware that our coal measures were swept away in some earth convulsion of early days, but our earth surface is with us still—rich, beautiful, and ever grateful for the care and tending of the husbandman, and it is to that parent source of human prosperity, the best and purest of all, that I would direct your thoughts—to the home, the garden, and the farm in the first instance, and in the second to the multiplication and manufacture, through technical development, of all the things which the surface of our island produces.

I am sometimes told that there is nothing to be done in Ireland. Are there, then, no weeds to be taken out from the fields? No cobwebs brushed from our ceilings? No mud swept from our

streets? No apathetic acceptation of things to be banished from our minds? I know how futile it is to put the old head on young shoulders—more futile, perhaps, in Ireland than anywhere else; but I would urge upon our young people of both sexes the necessity for their taking the fullest advantage of every opportunity offered by the Local and Imperial Governments for their teaching and training in the technical arts, and in the sciences and industries of modern life, getting into their minds, and into the habit of their fingers as large a store of mental knowledge and of physical aptitudes as they can possibly gather. To learn to think for one's self, that is a great secret; not to be dependent upon the newspapers, or on the opinion of the mob for that thinking power. The mob may have many heads and the newspaper many headings, but the philosophers of the world have never credited the heads or the headings with much wisdom.

I have already touched upon the subject of public spirit. What is public spirit? It is, I venture to think, the help or the advice which a man can give to his fellow man in life—the surplus of the time, the thought, or the money he is able and willing to hand over to the community in which he lived. If he cannot or will not help the other man he is not of much use to the general community.

Public spirit or service is, I take it, the spending in public duty of the surplus available from private effort.

Many things have been founded in the world upon the old conception of the duty of the indi-

vidual to the general public. The celibacy of the priesthood is largely based upon the necessity of helping other people. If the priest has neither wife nor child to demand his time and thought the people may have a large share of his labours in their behalf.

The real reason why the soldier of old had precedence given him was not because his coat was of different cut, or that he wore lace upon it, but only because he had devoted his life to the service of the community. Time has changed the applications of many of these old ideas, but their meanings are still with us. The man who is willing to help his brother man, or save his life, is still held in repute.

We often hear a great deal about the virtue of self-help. Self-help is, no doubt, a long advance upon self-helplessness, but it is also a long way behind unself-help. I can imagine an ideal state of society in which the man who will neither help himself or anyone else should be put out, or put up as a rogue and a vagabond. Certainly the loafer should not have the loaf, and if a strong man elects to tramp the roads he should also be obliged to mend them.

But there is one kind of help which, I think, we are in danger of invoking a little too frequently. It is the Government—that most unfortunate scapegoat—upon whose shoulders some people, at least, would pile the entire burthen of our unworked wood, our unfinished cattle, our unbaconed pigs,

and our ungathered hay. I am a little tired of this continuous groan against the Government. However justified it was in the past, I cannot think it is justified to-day.

The Government gives us money to buy the land of Ireland at the cheapest rate of interest ever known in modern times, and only recently we had the announcement of very large increases. The chief objection I have to the Government is, that it allows us, in common with our cousins in England and Scotland, too much scope for drinking too much, and too many idle days for going to the devil generally on the backs of horses and in betting booths. For the rest I find an entire absence of the Government in our religion, our home affairs, or in any of the relations of our lives.

The heaviest tax we have to pay in Ireland is the drink tax, and if we determine to wash our hands of that taxable commodity instead of washing our throats with it, we can keep thirteen to fourteen millions in our pockets annually.

Even if we were to knock off one drink in four we should have some three millions of money to spend on education—primary, secondary, or technical—every year.

My lord, Mr. Mayor, ladies and gentlemen, you will, I hope, pardon the length of the remarks to which I have condemned your patience, and to many of which you will, perhaps, demur, but whether we differ in opinion regarding the means by which the condition of our people can be

bettered, or upon the causes which underlie our present circumstances, I believe that we are one in the feeling that the object of all our training and all our endeavours, both in the home and in the school, should be to leave this world something better and brighter than we found it.

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